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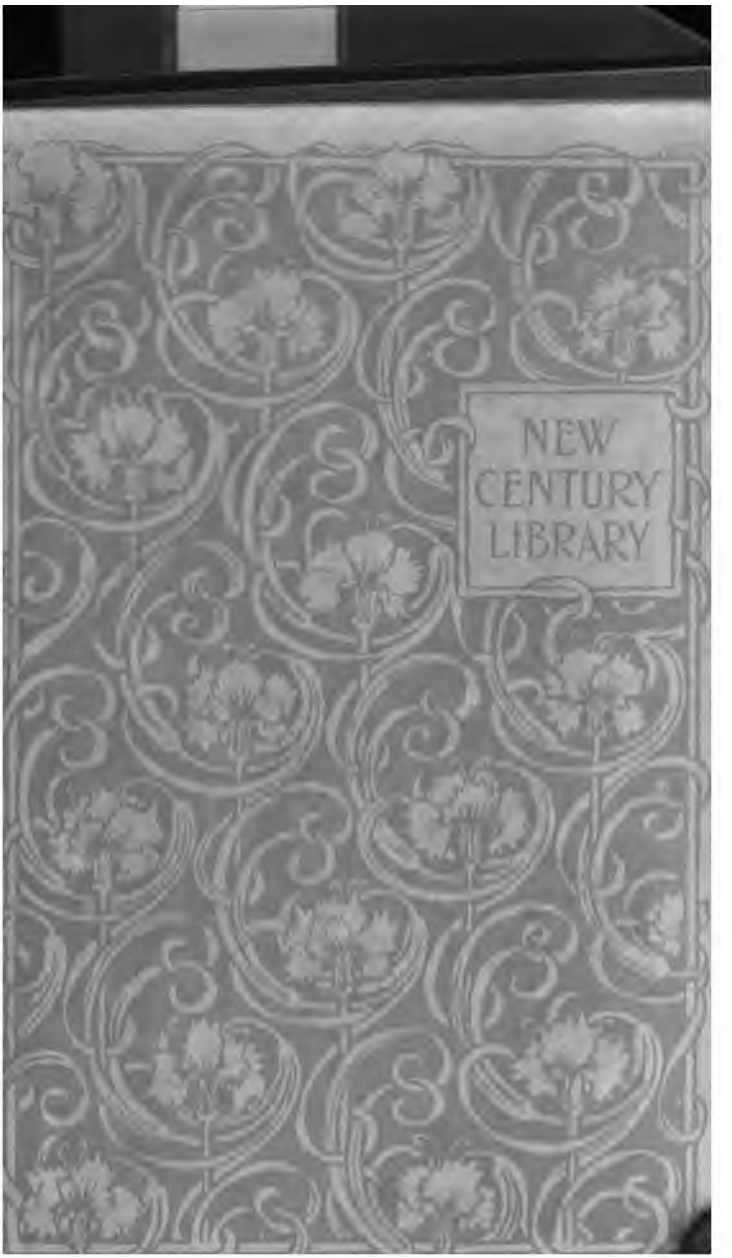
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The Works of William Makepeace Thackeray

Vol. VIII.

MEN'S WIVES

THE BEDFORD-ROW CONSPIRACY

Etc., Etc.

This One

JTS9-59H-RGXZ

Men's Wives

The Bedford-Row Conspiracy

Etc., Etc.

By

William Makepeace Thackeray

Thomas Nelson and Sons
London, Edinburgh, and New York
1900

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MEN'S WIVES

MEN'S WIVES.

By G. Fitz-Boodle.

THE RAVENSWING.

CHAPTER I.

WHICH IS ENTIRELY INTRODUCTORY — CONTAINS AN ACCOUNT OF MISS CRUMP, HER SUITORS, AND HER FAMILY CIRCLE.

IN a certain quiet and sequestered nook of the retired village of London—perhaps in the neighbourhood of Berkeley Square, or at any rate somewhere near Burlington Gardens—there was once a house of entertainment called the "Bootjack Hotel." Mr. Crump, the landlord, had, in the outset of life, performed the duties of boots in some inn even more frequented than his own, and, far from being ashamed of his origin, as many persons are in the days of their prosperity, had thus solemnly recorded it over the hospitable gate of his hotel.

Crump married Miss Budge, so well known to the admirers of the festive dance on the other side of the water as Miss Delancy; and they had one daughter, named Morgiana, after that celebrated part in the "Forty Thieves" which Miss Budge performed with unbounded applause both at the "Surrey" and "The Wells." Mrs. Crump sat in a little bar, profusely ornamented with pictures of the dancers of all ages, from Hillisberg, Rose, Parisot, who plied the light fan-

tastic toe in 1805, down to the Sylphides of our day. There was in the collection a charming portrait of herself, done by De Wilde: she was in the dress of Morgiana, and in the act of pouring, to very slow music, a quantity of boiling oil into one of the forty jars. In this sanctuary she sat, with black eyes, black hair, a purple face, and a turban; and morning, noon, or night, as you went into the parlour of the hotel, there was Mrs. Crump taking tea (with a little something in it), looking at the fashions, or reading Cumberland's "British Theatre." The *Sunday Times* was her paper, for she voted the *Dispatch*, that journal which is taken in by most ladies of her profession, to be vulgar and Radical, and loved the theatrical gossip in which the other mentioned journal abounds.

The fact is, that the "Royal Bootjack," though a humble, was a very genteel house; and a very little persuasion would induce Mr. Crump, as he looked at his own door in the sun, to tell you that he had himself once drawn off with that very bootjack the top-boots of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and the first gentleman in Europe. While, then, the houses of entertainment in the neighbourhood were loud in their pretended Liberal politics, the "Bootjack" stuck to the good old Conservative line, and was only frequented by such persons as were of that way of thinking. There were two parlours, much accustomed, one for the gentlemen of the shoulder-knot, who came from the houses of their employers hard by; another for some "gents who used the 'ouse," as Mrs. Crump would say (Heaven bless her!) in her simple cockniac dialect, and who formed a little club there.

I forgot to say that while Mrs. C. was sipping her eternal tea, or washing up her endless blue china, you might often hear Miss Morgiana employed at the little red-silk cottage piano, singing, "Come where the haspens quiver," or "Bonny lad, march over hill and furrow," or "My 'art and lute," or any other popular piece of the day. And the dear girl sung with very considerable skill too, for she had a fine loud voice, which, if not always in tune, made up for that defect by its great energy and activity; and Morgiana was not content with singing the mere tune, but gave every one of the roulades, flourishes, and ornaments as she heard them at

the theatres by Mrs. Humby, Mrs. Waylett, or Madame Vestris. The girl had a fine black eye like her mamma; a grand enthusiasm for the stage, as every actor's child will have; and, if the truth must be known, had appeared many and many a time at the theatre in Catherine Street, in minor parts first, and then in Little Pickle, in Desdemona, in Rosina, and in Miss Foote's part where she used to dance: I have not the name to my hand, but think it is Davidson. Four times in the week, at least, her mother and she used to sail off at night to some place of public amusement, for Mrs. Crump had a mysterious acquaintance with all sorts of theatrical personages; and the gates of her old haunt "The Wells," of "The Cobourg" (by the kind permission of Mrs. Davidge), nay, of the "Lane" and the "Market" themselves, flew open before her *Open sesame*, as the robbers' door did to her colleague, Ali Baba (Hornbuckle), in the operatic piece in which she was so famous.

Beer was Mr. Crump's beverage, variegated by a little gin in the evenings; and little need be said of this gentleman except that he discharged his duties honourably, and filled the president's chair at the club as completely as it could possibly be filled—for he could not even sit in it in his great-coat, so accurately was the seat adapted to him. His wife and daughter, perhaps, thought somewhat slightingly of him; for he had no literary tastes, and had never been at a theatre since he took his bride from one. He was valet to Lord Slapper at the time, and certain it is that his lordship set him up in the "Bootjack," and that stories *had* been told. But what are such to you or me? Let bygones be bygones: Mrs. Crump was quite as honest as her neighbours, and Miss had £500, to be paid down on the day of her wedding.

Those who know the habits of the British tradesman are aware that he has gregarious propensities, like any lord in the land; that he loves a joke; that he is not averse to a glass; that after the day's toil he is happy to consort with men of his degree; and that, as society is not so far advanced among us as to allow him to enjoy the comforts of splendid club-houses, which are open to many persons with not a tenth part of his pecuniary means, he meets his friends in the cosy tavern parlour, where a neat sanded floor, a large Windsor chair,

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each had an attraction in the place, and dared not leave the field in possession of his rival.

To do Miss Morgiana justice, it must be said that she did not encourage one more than another, but as far as accepting eau de Cologne and haircombs from the perfumer, some opera tickets, a treat to Greenwich, and a piece of real Genoa velvet for a bonnet (it had originally been intended for a waistcoat) from the admiring tailor, she had been equally kind to each, and in return had made each a present of a lock of her beautiful glossy hair. It was all she had to give, poor girl! And what could she do but gratify her admirers by this cheap and artless testimony of her regard? A pretty scene and quarrel took place between the rivals on the day when they discovered that each was in possession of one of Morgiana's ringlets.

Such, then, were the owners and inmates of the little "Bootjack," from whom and which, as this chapter is exceedingly discursive and descriptive, we must separate the reader for a while, and carry him — it is only into Bond Street, so no gentleman need be afraid — carry him into Bond Street, where some other personages are awaiting his consideration.

Not far from Mr. Eglantine's shop in Bond Street stand, as is very well known, the Windsor chambers. The West Diddlesex Association (Western Branch), the British and Foreign Soap Company, the celebrated attorneys Kite and Levison, have their respective offices here; and as the names of the other inhabitants of the chambers are not only painted on the walls, but also registered in Mrs. Boyle's "Court Guide," it is quite unnecessary that they should be repeated here. Among them, on the *entresol* (between the splendid saloons of the Soap Company on the first floor, with their statue of Britannia presenting a packet of the soap to Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and the West Diddlesex Western Branch on the basement), lives a gentleman by the name of Mr. Howard Walker. The brass plate on the door of that gentleman's chambers had the word "Agency" inscribed beneath his name, and we are therefore at liberty to imagine that he followed that mysterious occupation. In person Mr. Walker was very genteel: he had large whiskers,

dark eyes (with a slight cast in them), a cane, and a velvet waistcoat. He was a member of a club; had an admission to the opera, and knew every face behind the scenes; and was in the habit of using a number of French phrases in his conversation, having picked up a smattering of that language during a residence "on the Continent"—in fact, he had found it very convenient at various times of his life to dwell in the city of Boulogne, where he acquired a knowledge of smoking, *écarté*, and billiards, which was afterwards of great service to him. He knew all the best tables in town, and the marker at Hunt's could only give him ten. He had some fashionable acquaintances, too, and you might see him walking arm in arm with such gentlemen as my Lord Vauxhall, the Marquess of Billingsgate, or Captain Buff; and at the same time nodding to young Moses, the dandy bailiff, or Loder, the gambling-house keeper, or Aminadab, the cigar-seller in the Quadrant. Sometimes he wore a pair of moustaches, and was called Captain Walker, grounding his claim to that title upon the fact of having once held a commission in the service of her Majesty the Queen of Portugal. It scarcely need be said that he had been through the Insolvent Court many times. But to those who did not know his history intimately there was some difficulty in identifying him with the individual who had so taken the benefit of the law, inasmuch as in his schedule his name appeared as Hooker Walker, wine merchant, commission agent, music-seller, or what not. The fact is, that though he preferred to call himself Howard, Hooker was his Christian name, and it had been bestowed on him by his worthy old father, who was a clergyman, and had intended his son for that profession. But as the old gentleman died in York jail, where he was a prisoner for debt, he was never able to put his pious intentions with regard to his son into execution, and the young fellow (as he was wont with many oaths to assert) was thrown on his own resources, and became a man of the world at a very early age.

What Mr. Howard Walker's age was at the time of the commencement of this history, and, indeed, for an indefinite period before or afterwards, it is impossible to determine. If he were eight-and-twenty, as he asserted himself,

Time had dealt hardly with him: his hair was thin, there were many crows'-feet about his eyes, and other signs in his countenance of the progress of decay. If, on the contrary, he were forty, as Sam Snaffle declared, who himself had misfortunes in early life, and vowed he knew Mr. Walker in Whitecross Street Prison in 1820, he was a very young-looking person considering his age. His figure was active and slim, his leg neat, and he had not in his whiskers a single white hair.

It must, however, be owned that he used Mr. Eglantine's Regenerative Unction (which will make your whiskers as black as your boot); and, in fact, he was a pretty constant visitor at that gentleman's emporium — dealing with him largely for soaps and articles of perfumery, which he had at an exceedingly low rate. Indeed, he was never known to pay Mr. Eglantine one single shilling for those objects of luxury; and having them on such moderate terms, was enabled to indulge in them pretty copiously. Thus Mr. Walker was almost as great a nosegay as Mr. Eglantine himself: his handkerchief was scented with verbena, his hair with jessamine, and his coat had usually a fine perfume of cigars, which rendered his presence in a small room almost instantaneously remarkable. I have described Mr. Walker thus accurately, because, in truth, it is more with characters than with astounding events that this little history deals, and Mr. Walker is one of the principal of our *dramatis personæ*.

And so, having introduced Mr. W., we will walk over with him to Mr. Eglantine's emporium, where that gentleman is in waiting, too, to have his likeness taken.

There is about an acre of plate glass under the royal arms on Mr. Eglantine's shop-window; and at night, when the gas is lighted, and the washballs are illuminated, and the lambent flame plays fitfully over numberless bottles of vari-coloured perfumes—now flashes on a case of razors, and now lightens up a crystal vase containing a hundred thousand of his patent tooth-brushes—the effect of the sight may be imagined. You don't suppose that he is a creature who has those odious, simpering wax figures in his window, that are called by the vulgar dummies? He is above such a wretched artifice; and it is my belief that he would as soon have his

own head chopped off and placed as a trunkless decoration to his shop-window, as allow a dummy to figure there. On one pane you read in elegant gold letters "Eglantinia"—'tis his essence for the handkerchief; on the other is written "Regenerative Unction"—'tis his invaluable pomatum for the hair.

There is no doubt about it, Eglantine's knowledge of his profession amounts to genius. He sells a cake of soap for seven shillings, for which another man would not get a shilling, and his tooth-brushes go off like wildfire at half a guinea a piece. If he has to administer rouge or pearl-powder to ladies, he does it with a mystery and fascination which there is no resisting, and the ladies believe there are no cosmetics like his. He gives his wares unheard-of names, and obtains for them sums equally prodigious. He *can* dress hair—that is a fact—as few men in this age can; and has been known to take twenty pounds in a single night from as many of the first ladies of England when ringlets were in fashion. The introduction of bands, he says, made a difference of £2,000 a year in his income; and if there is one thing in the world he hates and despises, it is a Madonna. "I'm not," says he, "a tradesman—I'm a *hartist*" (Mr. Eglantine was born in London)—"I'm a hartist; and show me a fine 'ead of 'air, and I'll dress it for nothink." He vows that it was his way of dressing Mademoiselle Sontag's hair that caused the count her husband to fall in love with her; and he has a lock of it in a brooch, and says it was the finest head he ever saw, except one, and that was Morgiana Crump's.

With his genius and his position in the profession, how comes it, then, that Mr. Eglantine was not a man of fortune, as many a less clever has been? If the truth must be told, he loved pleasure, and was in the hands of the Jews. He had been in business twenty years; he had borrowed a thousand pounds to purchase his stock and shop; and he calculated that he had paid upwards of twenty thousand pounds for the use of the one thousand, which was still as much due as on the first day when he entered business. He could show that he had received a thousand dozen of champagne from the disinterested money-dealers with whom he usually negotiated his paper. He had pictures all over his "studios"

which had been purchased in the same bargains. If he sold his goods at an enormous price, he paid for them at a rate almost equally exorbitant. There was not an article in his shop but came to him through his Israelite providers; and in the very front shop itself sat a gentleman who was the nominee of one of them, and who was called Mr. Mossrose. He was there to superintend the cash account, and to see that certain instalments were paid to his principals, according to certain agreements entered into between Mr. Eglantine and them.

Having that sort of opinion of Mr. Mossrose which Damocles may have had of the sword which hung over his head, of course Mr. Eglantine hated his foreman profoundly. "*He* an artist," would the former gentleman exclaim; "why, he's only a disguised bailiff! Mossrose indeed! The chap's name's Amos, and he sold oranges before he came here." Mr. Mossrose, on his side, utterly despised Mr. Eglantine, and looked forward to the day when he would become the proprietor of the shop, and take Eglantine for a foreman; and then it would be *his* turn to sneer and bully, and ride the high horse.

Thus it will be seen that there was a skeleton in the great perfumer's house, as the saying is—a worm in his heart's core; and though to all appearance prosperous, he was really in an awkward position.

What Mr. Eglantine's relations were with Mr. Walker may be imagined from the following dialogue which took place between the two gentlemen at five o'clock one summer's afternoon, when Mr. Walker, issuing from his chambers, came across to the perfumer's shop:—

"Is Eglantine at home, Mr. Mossrose?" said Walker to the foreman, who sat in the front shop.

"Don't know—go and look" (meaning go and be hanged, for Mossrose also hated Mr. Walker).

"If you're uncivil I'll break your bones, Mr. *Amos*," says Mr. Walker sternly.

"I should like to see you try, Mr. *Hooker* Walker," replies the undaunted shopman; on which the captain, looking several tremendous canings at him, walked into the back room or "studio."

"How are you, Tiny, my buck?" says the Captain. "Much doing?"

"Not a soul in town. I 'aven't touched the hirons all day," replied Mr. Eglantine, in rather a desponding way.

"Well, just get them ready now, and give my whiskers a turn. I'm going to dine with Billingsgate and some out-and-out fellows at the 'Regent,' and so, my lad, just do your best."

"I can't," says Mr. Eglantine. "I expect ladies, captain, every minute."

"Very good; I don't want to trouble such a great man, I'm sure. Good-bye, and let me hear from you *this day week*, Mr. Eglantine." "This day week" meant that at seven days from that time a certain bill accepted by Mr. Eglantine would be due, and presented for payment.

"Don't be in such a hurry, Captain—do sit down. I'll curl you in one minute. And, I say, won't the party renew?"

"Impossible! it's the third renewal."

"But I'll make the thing handsome to you—indeed I will."

"How much?"

"Will ten pounds do the business?"

"What! offer my principal ten pounds? Are you mad, Eglantine?—A little more of the iron to the left whisker."

"No, I meant for commission."

"Well, I'll see if that will do. The party I deal with, Eglantine, has power, I know, and can defer the matter, no doubt. As for me, you know, *I've* nothing to do in the affair, and only act as a friend between you and him. I give you my honour and soul, I do."

"I know you do, my dear sir." The two last speeches were lies. The perfumer knew perfectly well that Mr. Walker would pocket the £10; but he was too easy to care for paying it, and too timid to quarrel with such a powerful friend. And he had on three different occasions already paid £10 fine for the renewal of the bill in question, all of which bonuses he knew went to his friend, Mr. Walker.

Here, too, the reader will perceive what was, in part, the meaning of the word "agency" on Mr. Walker's door. He

was a go-between between money-lenders and borrowers in this world, and certain small sums always remained with him in the course of the transaction. He was an agent for wine, too; an agent for places to be had through the influence of great men; he was an agent for half a dozen theatrical people, male and female, and had the interests of the latter especially, it was said, at heart. Such were a few of the means by which this worthy gentleman contrived to support himself; and if, as he was fond of high living, gambling, and pleasures of all kinds, his revenue was not large enough for his expenditure—why, he got into debt, and settled his bills that way. He was as much at home in the Fleet as in Pall Mall, and quite as happy in the one place as in the other. "That's the way I take things," would this philosopher say. "If I've money, I spend it; if I've credit, I borrow; if I'm dunned, I whitewash; and so you can't beat me down." Happy elasticity of temperament! I do believe that, in spite of his misfortunes and precarious position, there was no man in England whose conscience was more calm, and whose slumbers were more tranquil, than those of Captain Howard Walker.

As he was sitting under the hands of Mr. Eglantine, he reverted to "the ladies" whom the latter gentleman professed to expect; said he was a sly dog, a lucky ditto, and asked him if the ladies were handsome.

Eglantine thought there could be no harm in telling a bouncer to a gentleman with whom he was engaged in money transactions; and so, to give the captain an idea of his solvency and the brilliancy of his future prospects, "Captain," said he, "I've got a hundred and eighty pounds out with you, which you were obliging enough to negotiate for me. Have I, or have I not, two bills out to that amount?"

"Well, my good fellow, you certainly have; and what then?"

"What then? Why, I bet you five pounds to one, that in three months those bills are paid."

"Done! five pounds to one. I take it."

This sudden closing with him made the perfumer rather uneasy; but he was not to pay for three months, and so he said "Done!" too, and went on, "What would you say if your bills were paid?"

"Not mine—Pike's."

"Well, if Pike's were paid; and the Minories' man paid, and every single liability I have cleared off; and that Mossrose flung out of winder, and me and my emporium as free as hair?"

"You don't say so? Is Queen Anne dead, and has she left you a fortune? or what's the luck in the wind now?"

"It's better than Queen Anne or anybody dying. What should you say to seeing in that very place where Mossrose now sits (hang him!)—seeing the *finest head of 'air now in Europe?* A woman, I tell you—a slap-up lovely woman, who, I'm proud to say, will soon be called Mrs. Heglantine, and will bring me five thousand pounds to her fortune."

"Well, Tiny, this *is* good luck indeed. I say, you'll be able to do a bill or two for *me* then, hay? You won't forget an old friend?"

"That I won't. I shall have a place at my board for you, capting, and many's the time I shall 'ope to see you under that ma'ogany."

"What will the French milliner say? She'll hang herself for despair, Eglantine."

"Hush! not a word about *'er*. I've sown all my wild oats, I tell you. Eglantine is no longer the gay young bachelor, but the sober married man. I want a heart to share the feelings of mine. I want repose. I'm not so young as I was —I feel it."

"Pooh! pooh! you are—you are——"

"Well, but I sigh for an 'appy fireside; and I'll have it."

"And give up that club which you belong to, hay?"

"'The Kidneys'? Oh! of course, no married man should belong to such places—at least, *I'll* not; and I'll have my kidneys broiled at home. But be quiet, captain, if you please; the ladies appointed to——"

"And is it *the* lady you expect? eh, you rogue!"

"Well, get along. It's her and her Ma."

But Mr. Walker determined he wouldn't get along, and would see these lovely ladies before he stirred.

The operation on Mr. Walker's whiskers being concluded, he was arranging his toilet before the glass in an agreeable attitude—his neck out, his enormous pin settled in his stock

to his satisfaction, his eyes complacently directed towards the reflection of his left and favourite whisker. Eglantine was laid on a settee, in an easy though melancholy posture; he was twiddling the tongs with which he had just operated on Walker with one hand, and his right-hand ringlet with the other, and he was thinking—thinking of Morgiana; and then of the bill which was to become due on the 16th; and then of a light blue velvet waistcoat with gold sprigs, in which he looked very killing—and so was trudging round in his little circle of loves, fears, and vanities. "Hang it!" Mr. Walker was thinking, "I *am* a handsome man. A pair of whiskers like mine are not met with every day. If anybody can see that my tuft is dyed, may I be——" When the door was flung open, and a large lady with a curl on her forehead, yellow shawl, a green-velvet bonnet with feathers, half-boots, and a drab gown with tulips and other large exotics painted on it—when, in a word, Mrs. Crump and her daughter bounced into the room.

"Here we are, Mr. E.!" cries Mrs. Crump, in a gay, *folâtre*, confidential air. "But law! there's a gent in the room!"

"Don't mind me, ladies," said the gent alluded to, with his fascinating way. "I'm a friend of Eglantine's—ain't I, Egg? a chip of the old block, hay?"

"*That* you are," said the perfumer, starting up.

"An 'air-dresser?" asked Mrs. Crump. "Well, I thought he was. There's something, Mr. E., in gentlemen of your profession so exceeding, so uncommon *distangy*."

"Madam, you do me proud," replied the gentleman so complimented, with great presence of mind. "Will you allow me to try my skill upon you, or upon Miss, your lovely daughter? I'm not so clever as Eglantine, but no bad hand, I assure you."

"Nonsense, Captain," interrupted the perfumer, who was uncomfortable somehow at the rencontre between the Captain and the object of his affection. "*He's* not in the profession, Mrs. C. This is my friend Captain Walker, and proud I am to call him my friend." And then aside to Mrs. C., "One of the first swells on town, ma'am—a regular tip-topper."

Humouring the mistake which Mrs. Crump had just made,

Mr. Walker thrust the curling-irons into the fire in a minute, and looked round at the ladies with such a fascinating grace that both, now made acquainted with his quality, blushed and giggled, and were quite pleased. Mamma looked at 'Gina, and 'Gina looked at mamma; and then mamma gave 'Gina a little blow in the region of her little waist; and then both burst out laughing, as ladies will laugh, and as, let us trust, they *may* laugh for ever and ever. Why need there be a reason for laughing? Let us laugh when we are laughy, as we sleep when we are sleepy. And so Mrs. Crump and her demoiselle laughed to their hearts' content; and both fixed their large, shining black eyes repeatedly on Mr. Walker.

"I won't leave the room," said he, coming forward with the heated iron in his hand, and smoothing it on the brown paper with all the dexterity of a professor (for the fact is, Mr. W. every morning curled his own immense whiskers with the greatest skill and care)—"I won't leave the room, Eglantine my boy. My lady here took me for a hairdresser, and so, you know, I've a right to stay."

"He can't stay," said Mrs. Crump, all of a sudden, blushing as red as a peony.

"I shall have on my peignoir, mamma," said Miss, looking at the gentleman, and then dropping down her eyes and blushing too.

"But he can't stay, 'Gina, I tell you. Do you think that I would, before a gentleman, take off my——"

"Mamma means her FRONT!" said Miss, jumping up and beginning to laugh with all her might; at which the honest landlady of the "Bootjack," who loved a joke, although at her own expense, laughed too, and said that no one, except Mr. Crump and Mr. Eglantine, had ever seen her without the ornament in question.

"*Do* go now, you provoking thing, you!" continued Miss C. to Mr. Walker; "I wish to hear the hoverture, and it's six o'clock now, and we shall never be done against then." But the way in which Morgiana said "*do* go," clearly indicated "don't" to the perspicuous mind of Mr. Walker.

"Perhaps you 'ad better go," continued Mr. Eglantine, joining in this sentiment, and being, in truth, somewhat uneasy at the admiration which his "swell friend" excited.

"I'll see you hanged first, Eggy my boy! Go I won't, until these ladies have had their hair dressed. Didn't you yourself tell me that Miss Crump's was the most beautiful hair in Europe? And do you think that I'll go away without seeing it? No, here I stay."

"You naughty, wicked, odious, provoking man!" said Miss Crump. But, at the same time, she took off her bonnet, and placed it on one of the side candlesticks of Mr. Eglantine's glass (it was a black velvet bonnet, trimmed with sham lace, and with a wreath of nasturtiums, convolvuluses, and wallflowers within); and then said, "Give me the peignoir, Mr. Archibald, if you please;" and Eglantine, who would do anything for her when she called him Archibald, immediately produced that garment, and wrapped it round the delicate shoulders of the lady, who removing a sham gold chain which she wore on her forehead, two brass haircombs set with glass rubies, and the comb which kept her back hair together—removing them, I say, and turning her great eyes towards the stranger, and giving her head a shake, down let tumble such a flood of shining, waving, heavy, glossy, jetty hair, as would have done Mr. Rowland's heart good to see. It tumbled down Miss Morgiana's back, and it tumbled over her shoulders, it tumbled over the chair on which she sat, and from the midst of it her jolly, bright-eyed, rosy face beamed out with a triumphant smile, which said, "Ain't I now the most angelic being you ever saw?"

"By heavens! it's the most beautiful thing I ever saw!" cried Mr. Walker, with undisguised admiration.

"*Isn't* it?" said Mrs. Crump, who made her daughter's triumph her own. "Heigho! when I acted at 'The Wells' in 1820, before that dear girl was born, *I* had such a head of hair as that, to a shade, sir, to a shade. They called me Ravenswing on account of it. I lost my head of hair when that dear child was born, and I often say to her, 'Morgiana, you came into the world to rob your mother of her 'air.' Were you ever at 'The Wells,' sir, in 1820? Perhaps you recollect Miss Delancy? I am that Miss Delancy. Perhaps you recollect,—

"'Tink-a-tink, tink-a-tink,
By the light of the star,

On the blue river's brink,
I heard a guitar.

"'I heard a guitar,
On the blue waters clear,
And knew by its mu-u-sic,
That Selim was near!'

You remember that in the *Bagdad Bells?* Fatima, Delancy; Selim, Benlomond (his real name was Bunnion!: and he failed, poor fellow, in the public line afterwards). It was done to the tambourine, and dancing between each verse,—

"'Tink-a-tink, tink-a-tink,
How the soft music swells,
And I hear the soft clink
Of the minaret bells!

"'Tink-a——'"

"Oh!" here cried Miss Crump, as if in exceeding pain (and whether Mr. Eglantine had twitched, pulled, or hurt any one individual hair of that lovely head I don't know)—"Oh, you are killing me, Mr. Eglantine!"

And with this, mamma, who was in her attitude, holding up the end of her boa as a visionary tambourine, and Mr. Walker, who was looking at her, and in his amusement at the mother's performances had almost forgotten the charms of the daughter—both turned round at once, and looked at her with many expressions of sympathy, while Eglantine, in a voice of reproach, said, "*Killed* you, Morgiana! I kill *you?*"

"I'm better now," said the young lady, with a smile; "I'm better, Mr. Archibald, now." And if the truth must be told, no greater coquette than Miss Morgiana existed in all May Fair—no, not among the most fashionable mistresses of the fashionable valets who frequented the "Bootjack." She believed herself to be the most fascinating creature that the world ever produced; she never saw a stranger but she tried these fascinations upon him; and her charms of manner and person were of that showy sort which is most popular in this world, where people are wont to admire most that which gives them the least trouble to see—and so you will find a tulip of a woman to be in fashion when a little humble violet

or daisy of creation is passed over without remark. Morgiana was a tulip among women, and the tulip-fanciers all came flocking round her.

Well, the said "Oh!" and "I'm better now, Mr. Archibald," thereby succeeded in drawing everybody's attention to her lovely self. By the latter words Mr. Eglantine was specially inflamed. He glanced at Mr. Walker, and said, "Capting! didn't I tell you she was a *creecher?* See her hair, sir; it's as black and as glossy as satting. It weighs fifteen pound, that hair, sir; and I wouldn't let my apprentice—that blundering Mossrose, for instance (hang him!)—I wouldn't let any one but myself dress that hair for five hundred guineas! Ah, Miss Morgiana, remember that you *may always* have Eglantine to dress your hair!—remember that, that's all." And with this the worthy gentleman began rubbing delicately a little of the Eglantinia into those ambrosial locks, which he loved with all the love of a man and an artist.

And as for Morgiana showing her hair, I hope none of my readers will entertain a bad opinion of the poor girl for doing so. Her locks were her pride; she acted at the private theatre "hair parts," where she could appear on purpose to show them in a dishevelled state; and that her modesty was real and not affected may be proved by the fact that when Mr. Walker, stepping up in the midst of Eglantine's last speech, took hold of a lock of her hair very gently with his hand, she cried "Oh!" and started with all her might. And Mr. Eglantine observed very gravely, "Capting! Miss Crump's hair is to be seen and not to be touched, if you please."

"No more it is, Mr. Eglantine," said her mamma; "and now, as it's come to my turn, I beg the gentleman will be so obliging as to go."

"*Must I?*" cried Mr. Walker; and as it was half-past six, and he was engaged to dinner at the "Regent Club," and as he did not wish to make Eglantine jealous, who evidently was annoyed by his staying, he took his hat just as Miss Crump's coiffure was completed, and saluting her and her mamma, left the room.

"A tiptop swell, I can assure you," said Eglantine, nod-

ding after him; "a regular bang-up chap, and no *mistake*. Intimate with the Marquess of Billingsgate, and Lord Vauxhall, and that set."

"He's very genteel," said Mrs. Crump.

"Law! I'm sure I think nothing of him," said Morgiana.

And Captain Walker walked towards his club, meditating on the beauties of Morgiana. "What hair!" said he, "what eyes the girl has! they're as big as billiard-balls; and £5,000. Eglantine's in luck! £5,000—she can't have it, it's impossible!"

No sooner was Mrs. Crump's front arranged—during the time of which operation Morgiana sat in perfect contentment looking at the last French fashions in the *Courrier des Dames*, and thinking how her pink satin slip would dye, and make just such a mantilla as that represented in the engraving—no sooner was Mrs. Crump's front arranged, than both ladies, taking leave of Mr. Eglantine, tripped back to the "Bootjack Hotel" in the neighbourhood, where a very neat green fly was already in waiting, the gentleman on the box of which (from a livery stable in the neighbourhood) gave a knowing touch to his hat, and a salute with his whip, to the two ladies, as they entered the tavern.

"Mr. W.'s inside,' said the man—a driver from Mr. Snaffle's establishment. "He's been in and out this score of times, and looking down the street for you." And in the house, in fact, was Mr. Woolsey, the tailor, who had hired the fly, and was engaged to conduct the ladies that evening to the play.

It was really rather too bad to think that Miss Morgiana, after going to one lover to have her hair dressed, should go with another to the play; but such is the way with lovely woman! Let her have a dozen admirers, and the dear coquette will exercise her power upon them all; and as a lady, when she has a large wardrobe, and a taste for variety in dress, will appear every day in a different costume, so will the young and giddy beauty wear her lovers—encouraging now the black whiskers, now smiling on the brown; now thinking that the gay smiling rattle of an admirer becomes her very well, and now adopting the sad sentimental melancholy one, according as her changeful fancy prompts her.

Let us not be too angry with these uncertainties and caprices of beauty; and depend on it that, for the most part, those females who cry out loudest against the flightiness of their sisters, and rebuke their undue encouragement of this man or that, would do as much themselves if they had the chance, and are constant, as I am to my coat just now, because I have no other.

"Did you see Doubleyou, 'Gina dear?" said her mamma, addressing that young lady. "He's in the bar with your Pa, and has his military coat with the king's buttons, and looks like an officer."

This was Mr. Woolsey's style, his great aim being to look like an army gent, for many of whom he in his capacity of tailor made those splendid red and blue coats which characterize our military. As for the royal button, had not he made a set of coats for his late Majesty, George IV.? and he would add, when he narrated this circumstance, "Sir, Prince Blucher and Prince Swartzenberg's measure's in the house now; and what's more, I've cut for Wellington." I believe he would have gone to St. Helena to make a coat for Napoleon, so great was his ardour. He wore a blue-black wig, and his whiskers were of the same hue. He was brief and stern in conversation; and he always went to masquerades and balls in a field-marshal's uniform.

"He looks really quite the thing to-night," continued Mrs. Crump.

"Yes," said 'Gina; "but he's such an odious wig, and the dye of his whiskers always comes off on his white gloves."

"Everybody has not their own hair, love," continued Mrs. Crump with a sigh; "but Eglantine's is beautiful."

"Every hairdresser's is," returned Morgiana, rather contemptuously; "but what I can't bear is that their fingers is always so very fat and pudgy."

In fact, something had gone wrong with the fair Morgiana. Was it that she had but little liking for the one pretender or the other? Was it that young Glauber, who acted Romeo in the private theatricals, was far younger and more agreeable than either? Or was it, that seeing a *real gentleman*, such as Mr. Walker, with whom she had had her first interview, she felt more and more the want of refinement in her other de-

clared admirers? Certain, however, it is that she was very reserved all the evening, in spite of the attentions of Mr. Woolsey; that she repeatedly looked round at the box-door, as if she expected some one to enter; and that she partook of only a very few oysters, indeed, out of the barrel which the gallant tailor had sent down to the "Bootjack," and off which the party supped.

"What is it?" said Mr. Woolsey to his ally Crump, as they sat together after the retirement of the ladies. "She was dumb all night. She never once laughed at the farce nor cried at the tragedy, and you know she laughs and cries uncommon. She only took half her negus, and not above a quarter of her beer."

"No more she did!" replied Mr. Crump, very calmly. "I think it must be the barber as has been captivating her; he dressed her hair for the play."

"Hang him, I'll shoot him!" said Mr. Woolsey. "A fat, foolish, effeminate beast like that marry Miss Morgiana! Never! I *will* shoot him. I'll provoke him next Saturday —I'll tread on his toe—I'll pull his nose."

"No quarrelling at the 'Kidneys!'" answered Crump sternly; "there shall be no quarrelling in that room as long as *I'm* in the chair!"

"Well, at any rate, you'll stand my friend?"

"You know I will," answered the other. "You are honourable, and I like you better than Eglantine. I trust you more than Eglantine, sir. You're more of a man than Eglantine, though you *are* a tailor; and I wish with all my heart you may get Morgiana. Mrs. C. goes the other way, I know; but I tell you what, women will go their own ways, sir, and Morgy's like her mother in this point, and depend upon it Morgy will decide for herself."

Mr. Woolsey presently went home, still persisting in his plan for the assassination of Eglantine. Mr. Crump went to bed very quietly, and snored through the night in his usual tone. Mr. Eglantine passed some feverish moments of jealousy, for he had come down to the club in the evening, and had heard that Morgiana was gone to the play with his rival. And Miss Morgiana dreamed of a man who was—must we say it?—exceedingly like Captain Howard Walker.

"Psha! we're sick of 'em! We had pea-soup and boiled tripe! What do you think of *that?* We had sprats and herrings, a bullock's heart, a baked shoulder of mutton and potatoes, pig's fry, and Irish stew. *I* ordered the dinner, sir, and got more credit for inventing it than they ever gave to Ude or Soyer. The Marquess was in ecstasies; the Earl devoured half a bushel of sprats; and if the Viscount is not laid up with a surfeit of bullock's heart, my name's not Howard Walker. Billy, as I call him, was in the chair, and gave my health; and what do you think the rascal proposed?"

"What *did* his lordship propose?"

"That every man present should subscribe twopence, and pay for my share of the dinner. By Jove! it is true, and the money was handed to me in a pewter-pot, of which they also begged to make me a present. We afterwards went to Tom Spring's, from Tom's to the 'Finish,' from the 'Finish' to the watch-house—that is, *they* did—and sent for me, just as I was getting into bed, to bail them all out."

"They're happy dogs, those young noblemen," said Mr. Eglantine; "nothing but pleasure from morning till night. No affectation neither—no *hoture;* but manly, downright, straightforward good fellows."

"Should you like to meet them, Tiny, my boy?" said the Captain.

"If I did, sir, I hope I should show myself to be the gentleman," answered Mr. Eglantine.

"Well, you *shall* meet them, and Lady Billingsgate shall order her perfumes at your shop. We are going to dine, next week, all our set, at mealy-faced Bob's, and you shall be my guest," cried the Captain, slapping the delighted artist on the back. "And now, my boy, tell me how *you* spent the evening."

"At my club, sir," answered Mr. Eglantine, blushing rather.

"What! not at the play with the lovely black-eyed Miss—what is her name, Eglantine?"

"Never mind her name, Captain," replied Eglantine, partly from prudence, and partly from shame. He had not the heart to own it was Crump, and he did not care that the Captain should know more of his destined bride.

"You wish to keep the five thousand to yourself—eh, you rogue?" responded the Captain, with a good-humoured air, although exceedingly mortified; for, to say the truth, he had put himself to the trouble of telling the above long story of the dinner, and of promising to introduce Eglantine to the lords, solely that he might elicit from that gentleman's good-humour some further particulars regarding the young lady with the billiard-ball eyes. It was for the very same reason, too, that he had made the attempt at reconciliation with Mr. Mossrose which had just so signally failed. Nor would the reader, did he know Mr. W. better, at all require to have the above explanation; but as yet we are only at the first chapter of his history, and who is to know what the hero's motives can be unless we take the trouble to explain?

Well, the little dignified answer of the worthy dealer in bergamot, "*Never mind her name, Captain!*" threw the gallant Captain quite aback. And though he sat for a quarter of an hour longer, and was exceedingly kind, and though he threw out some skilful hints, yet the perfumer was quite unconquerable—or, rather, he was too frightened to tell: the poor, fat, timid, easy, good-natured gentleman was always the prey of rogues—panting and floundering in one rascal's snare or another's. He had the dissimulation, too, which timid men have, and felt the presence of a victimizer as a hare does of a greyhound. Now he would be quite still, now he would double, and now he would run, and then came the end. He knew, by his sure instinct of fear, that the Captain had, in asking these questions, a scheme against him, and so he was cautious, and trembled and doubted. And oh! how he thanked his stars when Lady Grogmore's chariot drove up, with the Misses Grogmore, who wanted their hair dressed, and were going to a breakfast at three o'clock!

"I'll look in again, Tiny," said the Captain, on hearing the summons.

"*Do*, Captain," replied the other; "*thank you*," and went into the ladies' studio with a heavy heart.

"Get out of the way, you infernal villain!" roared the Captain, with many oaths, to Lady Grogmore's large footman, with ruby-coloured tights, who was standing inhaling the ten thousand perfumes of the shop; and the latter, moving away

in great terror, the gallant agent passed out, quite heedless of the grin of Mr. Mossrose.

Walker was in a fury at his want of success, and walked down Bond Street in a fury. "I *will* know where the girl lives!" swore he. "I'll spend a five-pound note, by Jove! rather than not know where she lives."

"*That you would—I know you would!*" said a little grave low voice, all of a sudden, by his side. "Pooh! what's money to you?"

Walker looked down. It was Tom Dale.

Who in London did not know little Tom Dale? He had cheeks like an apple, and his hair curled every morning, and a little blue stock, and always two new magazines under his arm, and an umbrella and a little brown frock-coat, and big square-toed shoes with which he went *papping* down the street. He was everywhere at once. Everybody met him every day, and he knew everything that everybody ever did; though nobody ever knew what *he* did. He was, they say, a hundred years old, and had never dined at his own charge once in those hundred years. He looked like a figure out of a waxwork, with glassy, clear, meaningless eyes; he always spoke with a grin; he knew what you had for dinner the day before he met you, and what everybody had had for dinner for a century back almost. He was the receptacle of all the scandal of all the world, from Bond Street to Bread Street; he knew all the authors, all the actors, all the "notorieties" of the town, and the private histories of each. That is, he never knew anything really, but supplied deficiencies of truth and memory with ready-coined, never-failing lies. He was the most benevolent man in the universe, and never saw you without telling you everything most cruel of your neighbour; and when he left you, he went to do the same kind turn by yourself.

"Pooh! what's money to you, my dear boy?" said little Tom Dale, who had just come out of Ebers's, where he had been filching an opera ticket. "You make it in bushels in the City, you know you do—in thousands. *I* saw you go into Eglantine's. Fine business that; finest in London. Five-shilling cakes of soap, my dear boy. *I* can't wash with such. Thousands a year that man has made—hasn't he?"

"Upon my word, Tom, I don't know," says the Captain.

"*You* not know? Don't tell me. You know everything—you agents. You *know* he makes five thousand a year—ay, and might make ten; but you know why he don't."

"Indeed I don't."

"Nonsense. Don't humbug a poor old fellow like me. Jews—Amos—fifty per cent., ay? Why can't he get his money from a good Christian?"

"I *have* heard something of that sort," said Walker, laughing. "Why, by Jove, Tom, you know everything!"

"*You* know everything, my dear boy. You know what a rascally trick that opera creature served him, poor fellow. Cashmere shawls—Storr and Mortimer's—Star and Garter. Much better dine quiet off pea-soup and sprats—ay? His betters have, as you know very well."

"Pea-soup and sprats! What! have you heard of that already?"

"Who bailed Lord Billingsgate—ay, you rogue?" and here Tom gave a knowing and almost demoniacal grin. "Who wouldn't go to the 'Finish'? Who had the piece of plate presented to him filled with sovereigns? And you deserved it, my dear boy—you deserved it. They said it was only halfpence, but *I* know better!" and here Tom went off in a cough.

"I say, Tom," cried Walker, inspired with a sudden thought, "you, who know everything, and are a theatrical man, did you ever know a Miss Delancy, an actress?"

"At 'Sadler's Wells' in '16? Of course I did. Real name was Budge. Lord Slapper admired her very much, my dear boy. She married a man by the name of Crump, his lordship's black footman, and brought him five thousand pounds; and they keep the 'Bootjack' public-house in Bunker's Buildings, and they've got fourteen children. Is one of them handsome, eh, you sly rogue? and is it that which you will give five pounds to know? God bless you, my dear, dear boy.—Jones, my dear friend, how are you?"

And now, seizing on Jones, Tom Dale left Mr. Walker alone, and proceeded to pour into Mr. Jones's ear an account of the individual whom he had just quitted: how he was the best fellow in the world, and Jones *knew* it; how he was in

a fine way of making his fortune; how he had been in the Fleet many times, and how he was at this moment employed in looking out for a young lady of whom a certain great marquess (whom Jones knew very well, too) had expressed an admiration.

But for these observations, which he did not hear, Captain Walker, it may be pronounced, did not care. His eyes brightened up, he marched quickly and gaily away, and turning into his own chambers opposite Eglantine's shop, saluted that establishment with a grin of triumph. "You wouldn't tell me her name, wouldn't you?" said Mr. Walker. "Well, the luck's with me now, and here goes."

Two days after, as Mr. Eglantine, with white gloves and a case of eau de Cologne as a present in his pocket, arrived at the "Bootjack Hotel," Little Bunker's Buildings, Berkeley Square (for it must out—that was the place in which Mr. Crump's inn was situated), he paused for a moment at the threshold of the little house of entertainment, and listened, with beating heart, to the sound of delicious music that a well-known voice was uttering within.

The moon was playing in silvery brightness down the gutter of the humble street. A "helper," rubbing down one of Lady Smigsmag's carriage horses, even paused in his whistle to listen to the strain. Mr. Tressle's man, who had been professionally occupied, ceased his tap-tap upon the coffin which he was getting in readiness. The greengrocer (there is always a greengrocer in those narrow streets, and he goes out in white Berlin gloves as a supernumerary footman) was standing charmed at his little green gate; the cobbler (there is always a cobbler too) was drunk, as usual, of evenings, but, with unusual subordination, never sung except when the *refrain* of the ditty arrived, when he hiccuped it forth with tipsy loyalty; and Eglantine leaned against the chequers painted on the doorside under the name of Crump, and looked at the red illumined curtain of the bar, and the vast, well-known shadow of Mrs. Crump's turban within. Now and again the shadow of that worthy matron's hand would be seen to grasp the shadow of a bottle; then the shadow of a cup would rise towards the turban: and still the strain proceeded. Eglantine, I say, took out his yellow

bandanna, and brushed the beady drops from his brow, and laid the contents of his white kids on his heart, and sighed with ecstatic sympathy. The song began,—

"Come to the greenwood tree,*
Come where the dark woods be,
Dearest, O come with me!
Let us rove—O my love—O my love!
O my-y love!"

(*Drunken Cobbler without*)— "O my-y love!"

"Beast!" says Eglantine.

"Come—'tis the moonlight hour,
Dew is on leaf and flower,
Come to the linden bower,—
Let us rove—O my love—O my love!
Let us ro-o-ove, lurlurliety; yes, we'll rove, lurlurliety,
Through the gro-o-ove, lurlurliety—lurlurli-e-i-e-i-e-i!"

(*Cobbler as usual*)— "Let us ro-o-ove," etc.

"*You* here?" says another individual, coming clinking up the street, in a military-cut dress-coat, the buttons whereof shone very bright in the moonlight. "*You* here, Eglantine? You're always here."

"Hush, Woolsey," said Mr. Eglantine to his rival the tailor (for he was the individual in question); and Woolsey, accordingly, put his back against the opposite doorpost and chequers, so that (with poor Eglantine's bulk) nothing much thicker than a sheet of paper could pass out or in. And thus these two amorous caryatides kept guard as the song continued:—

"Dark is the wood, and wide,
Dangers, they say, betide;
But, at my Albert's side,
Nought I fear, O my love—O my love!

"Welcome the greenwood tree,
Welcome the forest free!
Dearest, with thee, with thee,
Nought I fear, O my love—O ma-a-y love!"

Eglantine's fine eyes were filled with tears as Morgiana passionately uttered the above beautiful words. Little Wool-

* The words of this song are copyright, nor will the copyright be sold for less than twopence-halfpenny.

men that they should coalesce against the common enemy; that they should, by reciting many perfectly well-founded stories in the Captain's disfavour, influence the minds of Miss Crump's parents, and of herself, if possible, against this wolf in sheep's clothing; and that, when they were once fairly rid of him, each should be at liberty, as before, to prefer his own claim.

"I have thought of a subject," said the little tailor, turning very red, and hemming and hawing a great deal. "I've thought, I say, of a pint, which may be resorted to with advantage at the present juncture, and in which each of us may be useful to the other. An exchange, Mr. Eglantine; do you take?"

"Do you mean an accommodation bill?" said Eglantine, whose mind ran a good deal on that species of exchange.

"Pooh, nonsense, sir! The name of *our* firm is, I flatter myself, a little more up in the market than some other people's names."

"Do you mean to insult the name of Archibald Eglantine, sir? I'd have you to know that at three months——"

"Nonsense!" says Mr. Woolsey, mastering his emotion. "There's no use a-quarrelling, Mr. E.; we're not in love with each other, I know that. You wish me hanged, or as good, I know that!"

"Indeed I don't, sir!"

"You do, sir; I tell you, you do! And what's more, I wish the same to you—transported, at any rate! But as two sailors, when a boat's a-sinking, though they hate each other ever so much, will help and bale the boat out; so, sir, let *us* act—let us be the two sailors."

"Bail, sir?" said Eglantine, as usual mistaking the drift of the argument. "I'll bail no man! If you're in difficulties, I think you had better go to your senior partner, Mr. Woolsey." And Eglantine's cowardly little soul was filled with a savage satisfaction to think that his enemy was in distress, and had actually been obliged to come to *him* for succour.

"You're enough to make Job swear, you great, fat, stupid, lazy old barber!" roared Mr. Woolsey, in a fury.

Eglantine jumped up and made for the bell-rope. The gallant little tailor laughed.

"There's no need to call in Betsy," said he. "I'm not a-going to eat you, Eglantine; you're a bigger man than me—if you were just to fall on me, you'd smother me! Just sit still on the sofa and listen to reason."

"Well, sir, pro-ceed," said the barber with a gasp.

"Now, listen! What's the darling wish of your heart? I know it, sir! you've told it to Mr. Tressle, sir, and other gents at the club. The darling wish of your heart, sir, is to have a slap-up coat turned out of the *ateliers* of Messrs. Linsey, Woolsey, and Company. You said you'd give twenty guineas for one of our coats, you know you did! Lord Bolsterton's a fatter man than you, and look what a figure we turn *him* out. Can any firm in England dress Lord Bolsterton but us, so as to make his lordship look decent? I defy 'em, sir! We could have given Daniel Lambert a figure!"

"If I want a coat, sir," said Mr. Eglantine, "and I don't deny it, there's some people want *a head of hair!*"

"That's the very point I was coming to," said the tailor, resuming the violent blush which was mentioned as having suffused his countenance at the beginning of the conversation. "Let us have terms of mutual accommodation. Make me a wig, Mr. Eglantine; and though I never yet cut a yard of cloth except for a gentleman, I'll pledge you my word I'll make you a coat."

"*Will* you, honour bright?" says Eglantine.

"Honour bright," says the tailor. "Look!" and in an instant he drew from his pocket one of those slips of parchment which gentlemen of his profession carry, and putting Eglantine into the proper position, began to take the preliminary observations. He felt Eglantine's heart thump with happiness as his measure passed over that soft part of the perfumer's person.

Then pulling down the window-blind, and looking that the door was locked, and blushing still more deeply than ever, the tailor seated himself in an armchair towards which Mr. Eglantine beckoned him, and, taking off his black wig, exposed his head to the great perruquier's gaze. Mr. Eglantine looked at it, measured it, manipulated it, sat for three minutes with his head in his hand and his elbow on his knee gazing at the tailor's cranium with all his might, walked round it

twice or thrice, and then said, "It's enough, Mr. Woolsey. Consider the job as done. And now, sir," said he, with a greatly relieved air—"and now, Woolsey, let us 'ave a glass of curaçoa to celebrate this hauspicious meeting."

The tailor, however, stiffly replied that he never drank in a morning, and left the room without offering to shake Mr. Eglantine by the hand; for he despised that gentleman very heartily, and himself, too, for coming to any compromise with him, and for so far demeaning himself as to make a coat for a barber.

Looking from his chambers on the other side of the street, that inevitable Mr. Walker saw the tailor issuing from the perfumer's shop, and was at no loss to guess that something extraordinary must be in progress when two such bitter enemies met together.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT CAME OF MR. WALKER'S DISCOVERY OF THE "BOOTJACK."

It is very easy to state how the Captain came to take up that proud position at the "Bootjack" which we have seen him occupy on the evening when the sound of the fatal "Brava" so astonished Mr. Eglantine.

The mere entry into the establishment was, of course, not difficult. Any person by simply uttering the words, "A pint of beer," was free of the "Bootjack;" and it was some such watchword that Howard Walker employed when he made his first appearance. He requested to be shown into a parlour where he might repose himself for a while, and was ushered into that very *sanctum* where the "Kidney Club" met. Then he stated that the beer was the best he had ever tasted, except in Bavaria, and in some parts of Spain, he added; and professing to be extremely "peckish," requested to know if there were any cold meat in the house whereof he could make a dinner.

"I don't usually dine at this hour, landlord," said he, flinging down a half-sovereign for payment of the beer; "but your parlour looks so comfortable, and the Windsor chairs are

so snug, that I'm sure I could not dine better at the first club in London."

"*One* of the first clubs in London is held in this very room," said Mr. Crump, very well pleased; "and attended by some of the best gents in town, too. We call it the 'Kidney Club.'"

"Why, bless my soul! it is the very club my friend Eglantine has so often talked to me about, and attended by some of the tiptop tradesmen of the metropolis!"

"There's better men here than Mr. Eglantine," replied Mr. Crump; "though he's a good man—I don't say he's not a good man—but there's better. Mr. Clinker, sir; Mr. Woolsey, of the house of Linsey, Woolsey, and Co.——"

"The great army clothiers!" cried Walker; "the first house in town!" and so continued with exceeding urbanity, holding conversation with Mr. Crump, until the honest landlord retired delighted, and told Mrs. Crump in the bar that there was a tiptop swell in the "Kidney" parlour who was a-going to have his dinner there.

Fortune favoured the brave Captain in every way. It was just Mr. Crump's own dinner-hour; and on Mrs. Crump stepping into the parlour to ask the guest whether he would like a slice of the joint to which the family were about to sit down, fancy that lady's start of astonishment at recognizing Mr. Eglantine's facetious friend of the day before. The Captain at once demanded permission to partake of the joint at the family table; the lady could not with any great reason deny this request; the Captain was inducted into the bar; and Miss Crump, who always came down late for dinner, was even more astonished than her mamma on beholding the occupier of the fourth place at the table. Had she expected to see the fascinating stranger so soon again? I think she had. Her big eye said as much, as, furtively looking up at Mr. Walker's face, they caught his looks; and then bouncing down again towards her plate, pretended to be very busy in looking at the boiled beef and carrots there displayed. She blushed far redder than those carrots, but her shining ringlets hid her confusion together with her lovely face.

Sweet Morgiana! the billiard-ball eyes had a tremendous effect on the Captain. They fell plump, as it were, into the

pocket of his heart; and he gallantly proposed to treat the company to a bottle of champagne, which was accepted without much difficulty.

Mr. Crump, under pretence of going to the cellar (where he said he had some cases of the finest champagne in Europe), called Dick, the boy, to him, and dispatched him with all speed to a wine-merchant's, where a couple of bottles of the liquor were procured.

"Bring up two bottles, Mr. C.," Captain Walker gallantly said when Crump made his move, as it were, to the cellar; and it may be imagined, after the two bottles were drunk (of which Mrs. Crump took at least nine glasses to her share), how happy, merry, and confidential the whole party had become. Crump told his story of the "Bootjack," and whose boot it had drawn. The former Miss Delancy expatiated on her past theatrical life, and the pictures hanging round the room. Miss was equally communicative; and, in short, the Captain had all the secrets of the little family in his possession ere sunset. He knew that Miss cared little for either of her suitors, about whom mamma and papa had a little quarrel. He heard Mrs. Crump talk of Morgiana's property, and fell more in love with her than ever. Then came tea, the luscious crumpet, the quiet game at cribbage, and the song—the song which poor Eglantine heard, and which caused Woolsey's rage and his despair.

At the close of the evening the tailor was in a greater rage, and the perfumer in greater despair, than ever. He had made his little present of eau de Cologne. "Oh, fie!" says the Captain, with a horse-laugh, "it *smells of the shop!*" He taunted the tailor about his wig, and the honest fellow had only an oath to give by way of repartee. He told his stories about his club and his lordly friends. What chance had either against the all-accomplished Howard Walker?

Old Crump, with a good innate sense of right and wrong, hated the man; Mrs. Crump did not feel quite at her ease regarding him; but Morgiana thought him the most delightful person the world ever produced.

Eglantine's usual morning costume was a blue satin neckcloth embroidered with butterflies and ornamented with a brandy-ball brooch, a light shawl waistcoat, and a rhubarb-

coloured coat of the sort which, I believe, are called Taglionis, and which have no waist-buttons, and make a pretence, as it were, to have no waists, but are in reality adopted by the fat in order to give them a waist. Nothing easier for an obese man than to have a waist: he has but to pinch his middle part a little, and the very fat on either side pushed violently forward *makes* a waist, as it were, and our worthy perfumer's figure was that of a bolster cut almost in two with a string.

Walker presently saw him at his shop-door grinning in this costume, twiddling his ringlets with his dumpy, greasy fingers glittering with oil and rings, and looking so exceedingly contented and happy that the estate-agent felt assured some very satisfactory conspiracy had been planned between the tailor and him. How was Mr. Walker to learn what the scheme was? Alas! the poor fellow's vanity and delight were such that he could not keep silent as to the cause of his satisfaction, and rather than not mention it at all, in the fullness of his heart he would have told his secret to Mr. Mossrose himself.

"When I get my coat," thought the Bond Street Alnaschar, "I'll hire of Snaffle that easy-going, cream-coloured 'oss that he bought from Astley's, and I'll canter through the Park; and *won't* I pass through Little Bunker's Buildings—that's all? I'll wear my grey trousers with the velvet stripe down the side, and get my spurs lacquered up, and a French polish to my boot; and if I don't *do* for the Captain, and the tailor too, my name's not Archibald. And I know what I'll do—I'll hire the small Clarence, and invite the Crumps to dinner at the 'Gar and Starter'" (this was his facetious way of calling the "Star and Garter"), "and I'll ride by them all the way to Richmond. It's rather a long ride, but with Snaffle's soft saddle I can do it pretty easy, I dare say." And so the honest fellow built castles upon castles in the air; and the last and most beautiful vision of all was Miss Crump "in white satting, with a horange-flower in her 'air," putting him in possession of "her lovely 'and before the haltar of St. George's, 'Anover Square." As for Woolsey, Eglantine determined that he should have the best wig his art could produce, for he had not the least fear of his rival.

These points then being arranged to the poor fellow's satisfaction, what does he do but send out for half a quire

of pink notepaper, and in a filigree envelope dispatch a note of invitation to the ladies at the "Bootjack:"—

"BOWER OF BLOOM, BOND STREET,
"*Thursday.*

"Mr. Archibald Eglantine presents his compliments to Mrs. and Miss Crump, and requests the *honour and pleasure* of their company at the 'Star and Garter' at Richmond to an early dinner on Sunday next.

"*If agreeable*, Mr. Eglantine's carriage will be at your door at three o'clock, and I propose to accompany them on horseback, if agreeable, likewise."

This note was sealed with yellow wax, and sent to its destination; and, of course, Mr. Eglantine went himself for the answer in the evening; and, of course, he told the ladies to look out for a certain new coat he was going to sport on Sunday; and, of course, Mr. Walker happens to call the next day with spare tickets for Mrs. Crump and her daughter, when the whole secret was laid bare to him—how the ladies were going to Richmond on Sunday in Mr. Snaffle's Clarence, and how Mr. Eglantine was to ride by their side.

Mr. Walker did not keep horses of his own; his magnificent friends at the "Regent" had plenty in their stables, and some of these were at livery at the establishment of the Captain's old "college" companion, Mr. Snaffle. It was easy, therefore, for the Captain to renew his acquaintance with that individual. So, hanging on the arm of my Lord Vauxhall, Captain Walker next day made his appearance at Snaffle's livery stables, and looked at the various horses there for sale or at bait, and soon managed, by putting some facetious questions to Mr. Snaffle regarding the "Kidney Club," etc., to place himself on a friendly footing with that gentleman, and to learn from him what horse Mr. Eglantine was to ride on Sunday.

The monster Walker had fully determined in his mind that Eglantine should *fall off* that horse in the course of his Sunday's ride.

"That sing'lar hanimal," said Mr. Snaffle, pointing to the old horse, "is the celebrated Hemperor that was the wonder of Hastley's some years back, and was parted with by Mr.

Ducrow honly because his feelin's wouldn't allow him to keep him no longer after the death of the first Mrs. D., who invariably rode him. I bought him, thinking that p'raps ladies and cockney bucks might like to ride him (for his haction is wonderful, and he canters like a harmchair); but he's not safe on any day except Sundays."

"And why's that?" asked Captain Walker. "Why is he safer on Sundays than other days?"

"*Because there's no music* in the streets on Sundays. The first gent that rode him found himself dancing a quadrille in Hupper Brook Street to an 'urdy-gurdy that was playing 'Cherry Ripe,' such is the natur of the hanimal. And if you recklect the play of the 'Battle of Hoysterlitz,' in which Mrs. D. hacted 'the female hussar,' you may remember how she and the horse died in the third act to the toon of 'God preserve the Emperor,' from which this horse took his name. Only play that toon to him, and he rears hisself up, beats the hair in time with his forelegs, and then sinks gently to the ground as though he were carried off by a cannon-ball. He served a lady hopposite Hapsley 'Ouse so one day; and since then I've never let him out to a friend except on Sunday, when, in course, there's no danger. Heglantine *is* a friend of mine, and, of course, I wouldn't put the poor fellow on a hanimal I couldn't trust."

After a little more conversation, my lord and his friend quitted Mr. Snaffle's, and as they walked away towards the "Regent," his lordship might be heard shrieking with laughter, crying, "Capital, by jingo! exthlent! Dwive down in the dwag! Take Lungly. Worth a thousand pound, by Jove!" and similar ejaculations, indicative of exceeding delight.

On Saturday morning, at ten o'clock to a moment, Mr. Woolsey called at Mr. Eglantine's with a yellow handkerchief under his arm. It contained the best and handsomest body-coat that ever gentleman put on. It fitted Eglantine to a nicety. It did not pinch him in the least; and yet it was of so exquisite a cut that the perfumer found, as he gazed delighted in the glass, that he looked like a manly, portly, high-bred gentleman—a lieutenant-colonel in the army, at the very least.

"You're a full man, Eglantine," said the tailor, delighted,

too, with his own work; "but that can't be helped. You look more like Hercules than Falstaff now, sir; and if a coat can make a gentleman, a gentleman you are. Let me recommend you to sink the blue cravat, and take the stripes off your trousers. Dress quiet, sir; draw it mild—plain waistcoat, dark trousers, black neckcloth, black hat; and if there's a better-dressed man in Europe to-morrow, I'm a Dutchman."

"Thank you, Woolsey—thank you, my dear sir," said the charmed perfumer. "And now I'll just trouble you to try on this here."

The wig had been made with equal skill. It was not in the florid style which Mr. Eglantine loved in his own person, but, as the perfumer said, a simple, straightforward head of hair. "It seems as if it had grown there all your life, Mr. Woolsey; nobody would tell that it was not your nat'ral colour"—(Mr. Woolsey blushed)—"it makes you look ten year younger; and as for that scarecrow yonder, you'll never, I think, want to wear that again."

Woolsey looked in the glass, and was delighted too. The two rivals shook hands and straightway became friends, and in the overflowing of his heart the perfumer mentioned to the tailor the party which he had arranged for the next day, and offered him a seat in the carriage and at the dinner at the "Star and Garter." "Would you like to ride?" said Eglantine, with rather a consequential air. "Snaffle will mount you, and we can go one on each side of the ladies, if you like."

But Woolsey humbly said he was not a riding man, and gladly consented to take a place in the Clarence carriage, provided he was allowed to bear half the expenses of the entertainment. This proposal was agreed to by Mr. Eglantine, and the two gentlemen parted to meet once more at the "Kidneys" that night, when everybody was edified by the friendly tone adopted between them.

Mr. Snaffle, at the club meeting, made the very same proposal to Mr. Woolsey that the perfumer had made, and stated that as Eglantine was going to ride Hemperor, Woolsey, at least, ought to mount too. But he was met by the same modest refusal on the tailor's part, who stated that he had never mounted a horse yet, and preferred greatly the use of a coach.

Eglantine's character as a "swell" rose greatly with the club that evening.

Two o'clock on Sunday came: the two beaux arrived punctually at the door to receive the two smiling ladies.

"Bless us, Mr. Eglantine!" said Miss Crump, quite struck by him, "I never saw you look so handsome in your life." He could have flung his arms around her neck at the compliment. "And law, Ma! what has happened to Mr. Woolsey? Doesn't he look ten years younger than yesterday?" Mamma assented, and Woolsey bowed gallantly, and the two gentlemen exchanged a nod of hearty friendship.

The day was delightful. Eglantine pranced along magnificently on his cantering armchair, with his hat on one ear, his left hand on his side, and his head flung over his shoulder, and throwing under-glances at Morgiana whenever the "Emperor" was in advance of the Clarence. The "Emperor" pricked up his ears a little uneasily passing the Ebenezer chapel in Richmond, where the congregation were singing a hymn, but beyond this no accident occurred; nor was Mr. Eglantine in the least stiff or fatigued by the time the party reached Richmond, where he arrived time enough to give his steed into the charge of an hostler, and to present his elbow to the ladies as they alighted from the Clarence carriage.

What this jovial party ate for dinner at the "Star and Garter" need not here be set down. If they did not drink champagne, I am very much mistaken. They were as merry as any four people in Christendom; and between the bewildering attentions of the perfumer, and the manly courtesy of the tailor, Morgiana very likely forgot the gallant captain, or, at least, was very happy in his absence.

At eight o'clock they began to drive homewards. "*Won't* you come into the carriage?" said Morgiana to Eglantine, with one of her tenderest looks; "Dick can ride the horse." But Archibald was too great a lover of equestrian exercise. "I'm afraid to trust anybody on this horse," said he, with a knowing look; and so he pranced away by the side of the little carriage. The moon was brilliant, and, with the aid of the gas-lamps, illuminated the whole face of the country in a way inexpressibly lively.

Presently, in the distance, the sweet and plaintive notes of

a bugle were heard, and the performer, with great delicacy, executed a religious air. "Music, too! heavenly!" said Morgiana, throwing up her eyes to the stars. The music came nearer and nearer, and the delight of the company was only more intense. The fly was going at about four miles an hour, and the "Emperor" began cantering to time at the same rapid pace.

"This must be some gallantry of yours, Mr. Woolsey." said the romantic Morgiana, turning upon that gentleman. "Mr. Eglantine treated us to the dinner, and you have provided us with the music."

Now Woolsey had been a little, a very little dissatisfied during the course of the evening's entertainment, by fancying that Eglantine—a much more voluble person than himself—had obtained rather an undue share of the ladies' favour; and as he himself paid half of the expenses, he felt very much vexed to think that the perfumer should take all the credit of the business to himself. So when Miss Crump asked if he had provided the music, he foolishly made an evasive reply to her query, and rather wished her to imagine that he *had* performed that piece of gallantry. "If it pleases *you*, Miss Morgiana," said this artful Schneider, "what more need any man ask? Wouldn't I have all Drury Lane orchestra to please you?"

The bugle had by this time arrived quite close to the Clarence carriage, and if Morgiana had looked round she might have seen whence the music came. Behind her came slowly a drag, or private stage-coach, with four horses. Two grooms with cockades and folded arms were behind; and driving on the box, a little gentleman, with a blue bird's-eye neckcloth, and a white coat. A bugleman was by his side, who performed the melodies which so delighted Miss Crump. He played very gently and sweetly, and "God save the King" trembled so softly out of the brazen orifice of his bugle, that the Crumps, the tailor, and Eglantine himself, who was riding close by the carriage, were quite charmed and subdued.

"Thank you, *dear* Mr. Woolsey," said the grateful Morgiana, which made Eglantine stare; and Woolsey was just saying, "Really, upon my word, I've nothing to do with

it," when the man on the drag-box said to the bugleman, "Now!"

The bugleman began the tune of—

"Heaven preserve our Emperor Fra-an-cis,
Rum tum-ti-tum-ti-titty-ti."

At the sound the "Emperor" reared himself (with a roar from Mr. Eglantine)—reared, and beat the air with his fore-paws. Eglantine flung his arms round the beast's neck: still he kept beating time with his fore-paws. Mrs. Crump screamed; Mr. Woolsey, Dick, the Clarence coachman, Lord Vauxhall (for it was he), and his lordship's two grooms, burst into a shout of laughter; Morgiana cries, "Mercy! mercy!" Eglantine yells, "Stop!"—"Wo!"—"Oh!" and a thousand ejaculations of hideous terror; until, at last, down drops the "Emperor" stone dead in the middle of the road, as if carried off by a cannon-ball.

Fancy the situation, ye callous souls who laugh at the misery of humanity—fancy the situation of poor Eglantine under the "Emperor!" He had fallen very easy, the animal lay perfectly quiet, and the perfumer was to all intents and purposes as dead as the animal. He had not fainted, but he was immovable with terror; he lay in a puddle, and thought it was his own blood gushing from him; and he would have lain there until Monday morning, if my lord's grooms, descending, had not dragged him by the coat-collar from under the beast, who still lay quiet.

"Play 'Charming Judy Callaghan,' will ye?" says Mr. Snaffle's man, the fly-driver. On which the bugler performed that lively air, and up started the horse; and the grooms, who were rubbing Mr. Eglantine down against a lamp-post, invited him to remount.

But his heart was too broken for that. The ladies gladly made room for him in the Clarence. Dick mounted "Emperor" and rode homewards. The drag, too, drove away, playing, "Oh dear, what can the matter be?" and with a scowl of furious hate, Mr. Eglantine sat and regarded his rival. His pantaloons were split, and his coat torn up the back.

"Are you hurt much, dear Mr. Archibald?" said Morgiana, with unaffected compassion.

"N-not much," said the poor fellow, ready to burst into tears.

"Oh, Mr. Woolsey," added the good-natured girl, "how could you play such a trick?"

"Upon my word," Woolsey began, intending to plead innocence; but the ludicrousness of the situation was once more too much for him, and he burst out into a roar of laughter.

"You—you cowardly beast!" howled out Eglantine, now driven to fury—"*you* laugh at me, you miserable cretur! Take *that*, sir!" and he fell upon him with all his might, and well-nigh throttled the tailor, and pummelling his eyes, his nose, his ears with inconceivable rapidity, wrenched, finally, his wig off his head, and flung it into the road.

Morgiana saw that Woolsey had red hair.*

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CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH THE HEROINE HAS A NUMBER MORE LOVERS, AND CUTS A VERY DASHING FIGURE IN THE WORLD.

Two years have elapsed since the festival at Richmond, which, begun so peaceably, ended in such general uproar. Morgiana never could be brought to pardon Woolsey's red hair, nor to help laughing at Eglantine's disasters; nor could the two gentlemen be reconciled to one another. Woolsey, indeed, sent a challenge to the perfumer to meet him with pistols; which the latter declined, saying, justly, that tradesmen had no business with such weapons. On this the tailor proposed to meet him with coats off, and have it out like men, in the presence of their friends of the "Kidney Club;" the perfumer said he would be party to no such vulgar transaction. On which Woolsey, exasperated, made an oath that he would tweak the perfumer's nose so surely as he ever entered the club-room; and thus *one* member of the "Kidneys" was compelled to vacate his armchair.

* A French *proverbe* furnished the author with the notion of the rivalry between the Barber and the Tailor.

Woolsey himself attended every meeting regularly, but he did not evince that gaiety and good-humour which render men's company agreeable in clubs. On arriving, he would order the boy to "tell him when that scoundrel Eglantine came;" and, hanging up his hat on a peg, would scowl round the room, and tuck up his sleeves very high, and stretch and shake his fingers and wrists, as if getting them ready for that pull of the nose which he intended to bestow upon his rival. So prepared, he would sit down and smoke his pipe quite silently, glaring at all, and jumping up, and hitching up his coat-sleeves, when any one entered the room.

The "Kidneys" did not like this behaviour. Clinker ceased to come. Bustard, the poulterer, ceased to come. As for Snaffle, he also disappeared, for Woolsey wished to make him answerable for the misbehaviour of Eglantine, and proposed to him the duel which the latter had declined. So Snaffle went. Presently they all went, except the tailor and Tressle, who lived down the street; and these two would sit and puff their tobacco, one on each side of Crump, the landlord, as silent as Indian chiefs in a wigwam. There grew to be more and more room for poor old Crump in his chair and in his clothes; the "Kidneys" were gone, and why should he remain? One Saturday he did not come down to preside at the club (as he still fondly called it), and the Saturday following Tressle had made a coffin for him; and Woolsey, with the undertaker by his side, followed to the grave the father of the "Kidneys."

Mrs. Crump was now alone in the world. "How alone?" says some innocent and respected reader. Ah! my dear sir, do you know so little of human nature as not to be aware that, one week after the Richmond affair, Morgiana married Captain Walker? That did she privately, of course; and, after the ceremony, came tripping back to her parents, as young people do in plays, and said, "Forgive me, dear Pa and Ma, I'm married, and here is my husband, the Captain!" Papa and mamma did forgive her, as why shouldn't they? and papa paid over her fortune to her, which she carried home delighted to the Captain. This happened several months before the demise of old Crump; and Mrs. Captain Walker was on the Continent with her Howard when that

melancholy event took place: hence Mrs. Crump's loneliness and unprotected condition. Morgiana had not latterly seen much of the old people. How could she, moving in her exalted sphere, receive at her genteel new residence in the Edgeware Road the old publican and his wife?

Being, then, alone in the world, Mrs. Crump could not abear, she said, to live in the house where she had been so respected and happy; so she sold the good-will of the "Boot-jack," and, with the money arising from this sale and her own private fortune, being able to muster some sixty pounds per annum, retired to the neighbourhood of her dear old "Sadler's Wells," where she boarded with one of Mrs. Serle's forty pupils. Her heart was broken, she said. But nevertheless, about nine months after Mr. Crump's death, the wall-flowers, nasturtiums, polyanthuses, and convolvuluses began to blossom under her bonnet as usual; in a year she was dressed quite as fine as ever; and now never missed the "Wells," or some other place of entertainment, one single night, but was as regular as the box-keeper. Nay, she was a buxom widow still, and an old flame of hers, Fisk, so celebrated as pantaloon in Grimaldi's time, but now doing the "heavy fathers" at the "Wells," proposed to her to exchange her name for his.

But this proposal the worthy widow declined altogether. To say truth, she was exceedingly proud of her daughter, Mrs. Captain Walker. They did not see each other much at first; but every now and then Mrs. Crump would pay a visit to the folks in Connaught Square; and on the days when "the Captain's" lady called in the City Road, there was not a single official at "The Wells," from the first tragedian down to the call-boy, who was not made aware of the fact.

It has been said that Morgiana carried home her fortune in her own reticule, and smiling placed the money in her husband's lap; and hence the reader may imagine, who knows Mr. Walker to be an extremely selfish fellow, that a great scene of anger must have taken place, and many coarse oaths and epithets of abuse must have come from him, when he found that five hundred pounds was all that his wife had, although he had expected five thousand with her. But, to

say the truth, Walker was at this time almost in love with his handsome, rosy, good-humoured, simple wife. They had made a fortnight's tour, during which they had been exceedingly happy; and there was something so frank and touching in the way in which the kind creature flung her all into his lap, saluting him with a hearty embrace at the same time, and wishing that it were a thousand billion billion times more, so that her darling Howard might enjoy it, that the man would have been a ruffian indeed could he have found it in his heart to be angry with her; and so he kissed her in return, and patted her on the shining ringlets, and then counted over the notes with rather a disconsolate air, and ended by locking them up in his portfolio. In fact, *she* had never deceived him; Eglantine had, and he in return had out-tricked Eglantine; and so warm were his affections for Morgiana at this time, that, upon my word and honour, I don't think he repented of his bargain. Besides, five hundred pounds in crisp bank-notes was a sum of money such as the Captain was not in the habit of handling every day. A dashing, sanguine fellow, he fancied there was no end to it, and already thought of a dozen ways by which it should increase and multiply into a plum. Woe is me! Has not many a simple soul examined five new hundred-pound notes in this way, and calculated their powers of duration and multiplication?

This subject, however, is too painful to be dwelt on. Let us hear what Walker did with his money. Why, he furnished the house in the Edgeware Road before mentioned; he ordered a handsome service of plate; he sported a phaeton and two ponies; he kept a couple of smart maids and a groom foot-boy—in fact, he mounted just such a neat, unpretending, gentlemanlike establishment as becomes a respectable young couple on their outset in life. "I've sown my wild oats," he would say to his acquaintances. "A few years since, perhaps, I would have longed to cut a dash, but now prudence is the word; and I've settled every farthing of Mrs. Walker's fifteen thousand on herself." And the best proof that the world had confidence in him, is the fact that for the articles of plate, equipage, and furniture, which have been mentioned as being in his possession, he did not pay one single shilling; and so

prudent was he, that but for turnpikes, postage-stamps, and king's taxes, he hardly had occasion to change a five-pound note of his wife's fortune.

To tell the truth, Mr. Walker had determined to make his fortune. And what is easier in London? Is not the share-market open to all? Do not Spanish and Columbian bonds rise and fall? For what are companies invented but to place thousands in the pockets of shareholders and directors? Into these commercial pursuits the gallant Captain now plunged with great energy, and made some brilliant hits at first starting, and bought and sold so opportunely, that his name began to rise in the City as a capitalist, and might be seen in the printed list of directors of many excellent and philanthropic schemes, of which there is never any lack in London. Business to the amount of thousands was done at his agency; shares of vast value were bought and sold under his management. How poor Mr. Eglantine used to hate him and envy him, as from the door of his emporium (the firm was Eglantine and Moss-rose now) he saw the Captain daily arrive in his pony-phaeton, and heard of the start he had taken in life.

The only regret Mrs. Walker had was that she did not enjoy enough of her husband's society. His business called him away all day; his business, too, obliged him to leave her of evenings very frequently alone; whilst he (always in pursuit of business) was dining with his great friends at the club, and drinking claret and champagne to the same end.

She was a perfectly good-natured and simple soul, and never made him a single reproach; but when he could pass an evening at home with her she was delighted, and when he could drive with her in the Park she was happy for a week after. On these occasions, and in the fullness of her heart, she would drive to her mother and tell her story. "Howard drove with me in the Park yesterday, mamma;" "Howard has promised to take me to the Opera," and so forth. And that evening the manager, Mr. Gawler, the first tragedian, Mrs. Serle and her forty pupils, all the box-keepers, bonnet-women, nay, the ginger-beer girls themselves, at "The Wells," knew that Captain and Mrs. Walker were at Kensington Gardens, or were to have the Marchioness of Billingsgate's box at the Opera. One night—O joy of joys!—

Mrs. Captain Walker appeared in a private box at "The Wells." That's she with the black ringlets and Cashmere shawl, smelling-bottle, and black velvet gown, and bird of paradise in her hat. Goodness gracious! how they all acted at her, Gawler and all; and how happy Mrs. Crump was! She kissed her daughter between all the acts; she nodded to all her friends on the stage, in the slips, or in the real water; she introduced her daughter, Mrs. Captain Walker, to the box-opener; and Melvil Delamere (the first comic), Canterfield (the tyrant), and Jonesini (the celebrated Fontarabian Statuesque), were all on the steps, and shouted for Mrs. Captain Walker's carriage, and waved their hats, and bowed as the little pony-phaeton drove away. Walker, in his moustaches, had come in at the end of the play, and was not a little gratified by the compliments paid to himself and lady.

Among the other articles of luxury with which the Captain furnished his house, we must not omit to mention an extremely grand piano, which occupied four-fifths of Mrs. Walker's little back drawing-room, and at which she was in the habit of practising continually. All day and all night during Walker's absences (and these occurred all night and all day) you might hear—the whole street might hear—the voice of the lady at No. 23 gurgling, and shaking, and quavering, as ladies do when they practise. The street did not approve of the continuance of the noise; but neighbours are difficult to please, and what would Morgiana have had to do if she had ceased to sing? It would be hard to lock a blackbird in a cage and prevent him from singing too. And so Walker's blackbird, in the snug little cage in the Edgeware Road, sang and was not unhappy.

After the pair had been married for about a year, the omnibus that passes both by Mrs. Crump's house near "The Wells," and by Mrs. Walker's street off the Edgeware Road, brought up the former-named lady almost every day to her daughter. She came when the Captain had gone to his business; she stayed to a two-o'clock dinner with Morgiana, she drove with her in the pony-carriage round the Park, but she never stopped later than six. Had she not to go to the play at seven? And, besides, the Captain *might* come home with some of his great friends, and he always swore and

grumbled much if he found his mother-in-law on the premises. As for Morgiana, she was one of those women who encourage despotism in husbands. What the husband says must be right, because he says it; what he orders must be obeyed tremblingly. Mrs. Walker gave up her entire reason to her lord. Why was it? Before marriage she had been an independent little person; she had far more brains than her Howard. I think it must have been his moustaches that frightened her, and caused in her this humility.

Selfish husbands have this advantage in maintaining with easy-minded wives a rigid and inflexible behaviour—namely, that if they *do* by any chance grant a little favour, the ladies receive it with such transports of gratitude as they would never think of showing to a lord and master who was accustomed to give them everything they asked for; and hence, when Captain Walker signified his assent to his wife's prayer that she should take a singing-master, she thought his generosity almost divine, and fell upon her mamma's neck, when that lady came the next day, and said what a dear adorable angel her Howard was, and what ought she not to do for a man who had taken her from her humble situation and raised her to be what she was! What she was, poor soul! She was the wife of a swindling *parvenu* gentleman. She received visits from six ladies of her husband's acquaintances—two attorneys' ladies, his bill-broker's lady, and one or two more, of whose characters we had best, if you please, say nothing; and she thought it an honour to be so distinguished—as if Walker had been a Lord Exeter to marry a humble maiden, or a noble prince to fall in love with a humble Cinderella, or a majestic Jove to come down from heaven and woo a Semele. Look through the world, respectable reader, and among your honourable acquaintances, and say if this sort of faith in women is not very frequent? They *will* believe in their husbands, whatever the latter do. Let John be dull, ugly, vulgar, and a humbug, his Mary Ann never finds it out; let him tell his stories ever so many times, there is she always ready with her kind smile; let him be stingy, she says he is prudent; let him quarrel with his best friend, she says he is always in the right; let him be prodigal, she says he is generous, and that his health requires

enjoyment; let him be idle, he must have relaxation; and she will pinch herself and her household that he may have a guinea for his club. Yes; and every morning as she wakes and looks at the face snoring on the pillow by her side—every morning, I say, she blesses that dull, ugly countenance, and the dull ugly soul reposing there, and thinks both are something divine. I want to know how it is that women do not find out their husbands to be humbugs? Nature has so provided it, and thanks to her. When last year they were acting the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and all the boxes began to roar with great coarse heehaws at Titania hugging Bottom's long ears—to me, considering these things, it seemed that there were a hundred other male brutes squatted round about, and treated just as reasonably as Bottom was. Their Titanias lulled them to sleep in their laps, summoned a hundred smiling, delicate, household fairies to tickle their gross intellects and minister to their vulgar pleasures; and (as the above remarks are only supposed to apply to honest women loving their own lawful spouses) a mercy it is that no wicked Puck is in the way to open their eyes and point out their folly. *Cui bono?* let them live on in their deceit: I know two lovely ladies who will read this, and will say it is just very likely, and not see in the least that it has been written regarding *them.*

Another point of sentiment, and one curious to speculate on. Have you not remarked the immense works of art that women get through? The worsted-work sofas, the counterpanes patched or knitted (but these are among the old-fashioned in the country), the bushels of pincushions, the albums they laboriously fill, the tremendous pieces of music they practise, the thousand other fiddle-faddles which occupy the attention of the dear souls—nay, have we not seen them seated of evenings in a squad or company, Louisa employed at the worsted-work before mentioned, Eliza at the pincushions, Amelia at card-racks or filigree matches, and, in the midst, Theodosia, with one of the candles, reading out a novel aloud? Ah! my dear sir, mortal creatures must be very hard put to it for amusement, be sure of that, when they are forced to gather together in a company and hear novels read aloud! They only do it because they can't help

it, depend upon it: it is a sad life, a poor pastime. Mr. Dickens, in his American book, tells of the prisoners at the silent prison, how they had ornamented their rooms, some of them with a frightful prettiness and elaboration. Women's fancy-work is of this sort often—only prison-work, done because there was no other exercising-ground for their poor little thoughts and fingers; and hence these wonderful pincushions are executed, these counterpanes woven, these sonatas learned. By everything sentimental, when I see two kind, innocent, fresh-cheeked young women go to a piano, and sit down opposite to it upon two chairs piled with more or less music-books (according to their convenience), and, so seated, go through a set of double-barrelled variations upon this or that tune by Herz or Kalkbrenner,—I say, far from receiving any satisfaction at the noise made by the performance, my too susceptible heart is given up entirely to bleeding for the performers. What hours, and weeks, nay, preparatory years of study, has that infernal jingle cost them! What sums has papa paid, what scoldings has mamma administered ("Lady Bullblock does not play herself," Sir Thomas says, "but she has naturally the finest ear for music ever known!"); what evidences of slavery, in a word, are there! It is the condition of the young lady's existence. She breakfasts at eight; she does "Mangnall's Questions" with the governess till ten; she practises till one; she walks in the square with bars round her till two; then she practises again; then she sews or hems, or reads French, or Hume's "History;" then she comes down to play to papa, because he likes music whilst he is asleep after dinner; and then it is bed-time, and the morrow is another day with what are called the same "duties" to be gone through. A friend of mine went to call at a nobleman's house the other day, and one of the young ladies of the house came into the room with a tray on her head: this tray was to give Lady Maria a graceful carriage. *Mon Dieu!* and who knows but at that moment Lady Bell was at work with a pair of her dumb namesakes, and Lady Sophy lying flat on a stretching-board? I could write whole articles on this theme: but peace! we are keeping Mrs. Walker waiting all the while.

Well, then, if the above disquisitions have anything to do

with the story, as no doubt they have, I wish it to be understood that, during her husband's absence, and her own solitary confinement, Mrs. Howard Walker bestowed a prodigious quantity of her time and energy on the cultivation of her musical talent; and having, as before stated, a very fine loud voice, speedily attained no ordinary skill in the use of it. She first had for teacher little Podmore, the fat chorus-master at "The Wells," and who had taught her mother the "Tink-a-tink" song which has been such a favourite since it first appeared. He grounded her well, and bade her eschew the singing of all those "Eagle Tavern" ballads in which her heart formerly delighted; and when he had brought her to a certain point of skill, the honest little chorus-master said she should have a still better instructor, and wrote a note to Captain Walker (enclosing his own little account), speaking in terms of the most flattering encomium of his lady's progress, and recommending that she should take lessons of the celebrated Baroski. Captain Walker dismissed Podmore then, and engaged Signor Baroski, at a vast expense—as he did not fail to tell his wife. In fact, he owed Baroski no less than two hundred and twenty guineas when he came to file his Sched—— But we are advancing matters.

Little Baroski is the author of the opera of "Eliogabalo," of the oratorio of "Purgatorio," which made such an immense sensation, of songs and ballet-musics innumerable. He is a German by birth, and shows such an outrageous partiality for pork and sausages, and attends at church so constantly, that I am sure there cannot be any foundation in the story that he is a member of the ancient religion. He is a fat little man, with a hooked nose and jetty whiskers, and coal-black shining eyes, and plenty of rings and jewels on his fingers and about his person, and a very considerable portion of his shirt-sleeves turned over his coat to take the air. His great hands (which can sprawl over half a piano, and produce those effects on the instrument for which he is celebrated) are encased in lemon-coloured kids, new, or cleaned daily. Parenthetically, let us ask why so many men, with coarse red wrists and big hands, persist in the white kid glove and wristband system? Baroski's gloves alone must cost him a little fortune; only he says with a leer, when

asked the question, "Get along vid you; don't you know dere is a gloveress that lets me have dem very sheap?" He rides in the Park; has splendid lodgings in Dover Street; and is a member of the "Regent Club," where he is a great source of amusement to the members, to whom he tells astonishing stories of his successes with the ladies, and for whom he has always play and opera tickets in store. His eye glistens and his little heart beats when a lord speaks to him; and he has been known to spend large sums of money in giving treats to young sprigs of fashion at Richmond and elsewhere. "In my bolyticks," he says, "I am consarevatiff to de bag-bone." In fine, he is a puppy, and withal a man of considerable genius in his profession.

This gentleman then undertook to complete the musical education of Mrs. Walker. He expressed himself at once "enshanted vid her gababilities," found that the extent of her voice was "brodigious," and guaranteed that she should become a first-rate singer. The pupil was apt, the master was exceedingly skilful, and accordingly Mrs. Walker's progress was very remarkable; although, for her part, honest Mrs. Crump, who used to attend her daughter's lessons would grumble not a little at the new system, and the endless exercises which she, Morgiana, was made to go through. It was very different in *her* time, she said. Incledon knew no music, and who could sing so well now? Give her a good English ballad; it was a thousand times sweeter than your "Figaros" and "Semiramides."

In spite of these objections, however, and with amazing perseverance and cheerfulness, Mrs. Walker pursued the method of study pointed out to her by her master. As soon as her husband went to the city in the morning her operations began; if he remained away at dinner, her labours still continued. Nor is it necessary for me to particularize her course of study, nor, indeed, possible; for, between ourselves, none of the male Fitz-Boodles ever could sing a note, and the jargon of scales and solfeggios is quite unknown to me. But as no man can have seen persons addicted to music without remarking the prodigious energies they display in the pursuit, as there is no father of daughters, however ignorant, but is aware of the piano-rattling and voice-

exercising which goes on in his house from morning till night, so let all fancy, without further inquiry, how the heroine of our story was at this stage of her existence occupied.

Walker was delighted with her progress, and did everything but pay Baroski, her instructor. We know why he didn't pay. It was his nature not to pay bills, except on extreme compulsion; but why did not Baroski employ that extreme compulsion? Because, if he had received his money, he would have lost his pupil, and because he loved his pupil more than money. Rather than lose her, he would have given her a guinea as well as her *cachet*. He would sometimes disappoint a great personage, but he never missed his attendance on *her;* and the truth must out, that he was in love with her, as Woolsey and Eglantine had been before.

"By the immortel Chofe!" he would say, "dat letell ding sents me mad vid her big ice! But only vait avile: in six veeks I can bring any voman in England on her knees to me; and you shall see vat I vill do vid my Morgiana." He attended her for six weeks punctually, and yet Morgiana was never brought down on her knees; he exhausted his best stock of "gomblimends," and she never seemed disposed to receive them with anything but laughter. And, as a matter of course, he only grew more infatuated with the lovely creature who was so provokingly good-humoured and so laughingly cruel.

Benjamin Baroski was one of the chief ornaments of the musical profession in London. He charged a guinea for a lesson of three-quarters of an hour abroad; and he had, furthermore, a school at his own residence, where pupils assembled in considerable numbers, and of that curious mixed kind which those may see who frequent these places of instruction. There were very innocent young ladies with their mammas, who would hurry them off trembling to the farther corner of the room when certain doubtful professional characters made their appearance. There was Miss Grigg, who sang at the "Foundling," and Mr. Johnson, who sang at the "Eagle Tavern," and Madame Fioravanti (a *very* doubtful character), who sang nowhere, but was always coming out at the Italian Opera. There was Lumley Lim-

piter (Lord Tweedledale's son), one of the most accomplished tenors in town, and who, we have heard, sings with the professionals at a hundred concerts; and with him, too, was Captain Guzzard of the Guards, with his tremendous bass voice, which all the world declared to be as fine as Porto's, and who shared the applause of Baroski's school with Mr. Bulger, the dentist of Sackville Street, who neglected his ivory and gold plates for his voice, as every unfortunate individual will do who is bitten by the music mania. Then among the ladies there were a half-score of dubious pale governesses and professionals with turned frocks and lank damp bandeaux of hair under shabby little bonnets; luckless creatures these, who were parting with their poor little store of half-guineas to be enabled to say they were pupils of Signor Baroski, and so get pupils of their own among the British youths, or employment in the choruses of the theatres.

The *prima donna* of the little company was Amelia Larkins, Baroski's own articled pupil, on whose future reputation the eminent master staked his own, whose profits he was to share, and whom he had farmed, to this end, from her father, a most respectable sheriff-officer's assistant, and now, by his daughter's exertions, a considerable capitalist. Amelia is blonde and blue-eyed, her complexion is as bright as snow, her ringlets of the colour of straw, her figure—— But why describe her figure? Has not all the world seen her at the Theatres Royal and in America, under the name of Miss Ligonier?

Until Mrs. Walker arrived, Miss Larkins was the undisputed princess of the Baroski company—the Semiramide, the Rosina, the Tamina, the Donna Anna. Baroski vaunted her everywhere as the great rising genius of the day, bade Catalani look to her laurels, and questioned whether Miss Stephens could sing a ballad like his pupil. Mrs. Howard Walker arrived, and created, on the first occasion, no small sensation. She improved, and the little society became speedily divided into Walkerites and Larkinsians; and between these two ladies (as, indeed, between Guzzard and Bulger before mentioned, between Miss Brunck and Miss Horsman, the two contraltos, and between the chorus-singers,

after their kind) a great rivalry arose. Larkins was certainly the better singer; but could her straw-coloured curls and dumpy high-shouldered figure bear any comparison with the jetty ringlets and stately form of Morgiana? Did not Mrs. Walker, too, come to the music-lesson in her carriage, and with a black velvet gown and Cashmere shawl; while poor Larkins meekly stepped from Bell Yard, Temple Bar, in an old print gown and clogs, which she left in the hall? "Larkins sing!" said Mrs. Crump sarcastically. "I'm sure she ought; her mouth's big enough to sing a duet." Poor Larkins had no one to make epigrams in her behoof; her mother was at home tending the younger ones, her father abroad following the duties of his profession; she had but one protector, as she thought, and that one was Baroski. Mrs. Crump did not fail to tell Lumley Limpiter of her own former triumphs, and to sing him "Tink-a-tink," which we have previously heard, and to state how in former days she had been called the Ravenswing. And Lumley, on this hint, made a poem, in which he compared Morgiana's hair to the plumage of the raven's wing, and Larkinissa's to that of the canary; by which two names the ladies began soon to be known in the school.

Ere long the flight of the Ravenswing became evidently stronger, whereas that of the canary was seen evidently to droop. When Morgiana sang, all the room would cry "bravo;" when Amelia performed, scarce a hand was raised for applause of her, except Morgiana's own, and that the Larkinses thought was lifted in odious triumph, rather than in sympathy, for Miss L. was of an envious turn, and little understood the generosity of her rival.

At last, one day the crowning victory of the Ravenswing came. In the trio of Baroski's own opera of "Eliogabalo," "Rosy lips and rosy wine," Miss Larkins, who was evidently unwell, was taking the part of the English captive, which she had sung in public concerts before royal dukes, and with considerable applause, and, from some reason, performed it so ill, that Baroski, slapping down the music on the piano in a fury, cried, "Mrs. Howard Walker, as Miss Larkins cannot sing to-day, will you favour us by taking the part of Boadicetta?" Mrs. Walker got up smilingly to obey—the triumph

was too great to be withstood; and, as she advanced to the piano, Miss Larkins looked wildly at her, and stood silent for a while, and at last shrieked out "*Benjamin!*" in a tone of extreme agony, and dropped fainting down on the ground. Benjamin looked extremely red, it must be confessed, at being thus called by what we shall denominate his Christian name, and Limpiter looked round at Guzzard, and Miss Brunck nudged Miss Horsman, and the lesson concluded rather abruptly that day; for Miss Larkins was carried off to the next room, laid on a couch, and sprinkled with water.

Good-natured Morgiana insisted that her mother should take Miss Larkins to Bell Yard in her carriage, and went herself home on foot; but I don't know that this piece of kindness prevented Larkins from hating her. I should doubt if it did.

Hearing so much of his wife's skill as a singer, the astute Captain Walker determined to take advantage of it for the purpose of increasing his "connection." He had Lumley Limpiter at his house before long—which was, indeed, no great matter, for honest Lum would go anywhere for a good dinner, and an opportunity to show off his voice afterwards—and Lumley was begged to bring any more clerks in the Treasury of his acquaintance; Captain Guzzard was invited, and any officers of the Guards whom he might choose to bring; Bulger received occasional cards: in a word, and after a short time, Mrs. Howard Walker's musical parties began to be considerably *suivies*. Her husband had the satisfaction to see his rooms filled by many great personages; and once or twice in return (indeed, whenever she was wanted, or when people could not afford to hire the first singers) she was asked to parties elsewhere, and treated with that killing civility which our English aristocracy knows how to bestow on artists. Clever and wise aristocracy! It is sweet to mark your ways, and study your commerce with inferior men.

I was just going to commence a tirade regarding the aristocracy here, and to rage against that cool assumption of superiority which distinguishes their lordships' commerce with artists of all sorts—that politeness which, if it condescend to

receive artists at all, takes care to have them all together, so that there can be no mistake about their rank—that august patronage of art which rewards it with a silly flourish of knighthood, to be sure, but takes care to exclude it from any contact with its betters in society,—I was, I say, just going to commence a tirade against the aristocracy for excluding artists from their company, and to be extremely satirical upon them, for instance, for not receiving my friend Morgiana, when it suddenly came into my head to ask, was Mrs. Walker fit to move in the best society?—to which query it must humbly be replied that she was not. Her education was not such as to make her quite the equal of Baker Street. She was a kind, honest, and clever creature; but it must be confessed, not refined. Wherever she went she had, if not the finest, at any rate the most showy gown in the room; her ornaments were the biggest; her hats, toques, berets, marabouts, and other fallals, always the most conspicuous. She drops *h*'s here and there. I have seen her eat pease with a knife (and Walker, scowling on the opposite side of the table, striving in vain to catch her eye); and I shall never forget Lady Smigsmag's horror when she asked for porter at dinner at Richmond, and began to drink it out of the pewter pot. It was a fine sight. She lifted up the tankard with one of the finest arms, covered with the biggest bracelets ever seen; and had a bird of paradise on her head, that curled round the pewter disk of the pot, as she raised it, like a halo. These peculiarities she had, and has still. She is best away from the genteel world, that is the fact. When she says that "The weather is so 'ot that it is quite debiliating;" when she laughs, when she hits her neighbour at dinner on the side of the waistcoat (as she will if he should say anything that amuses her), she does what is perfectly natural and unaffected on her part, but what is not customarily done among polite persons, who can sneer at her odd manners and her vanity, but don't know the kindness, honesty, and simplicity which distinguish her. This point being admitted, it follows, of course, that the tirade against the aristocracy would, in the present instance, be out of place—so it shall be reserved for some other occasion.

The Ravenswing was a person admirably disposed by

nature to be happy. She had a disposition so kindly that any small attention would satisfy it; was pleased when alone; was delighted in a crowd; was charmed with a joke, however old; was always ready to laugh, to sing, to dance, or to be merry; was so tender-hearted that the smallest ballad would make her cry, and hence was supposed by many persons to be extremely affected, and by almost all to be a downright coquette. Several competitors for her favour presented themselves besides Baroski. Young dandies used to canter round her phaeton in the Park, and might be seen haunting her doors in the mornings. The fashionable artist of the day made a drawing of her, which was engraved and sold in the shops; a copy of it was printed in a song, "Black-eyed Maiden of Araby," the words by Desmond Mulligan, Esq., the music composed, and dedicated to MRS. HOWARD WALKER, by her most faithful and obliged servant, Benjamin Baroski; and at night her Opera box was full. Her Opera box? Yes, the heiress of the "Bootjack" actually had an Opera box, and some of the most fashionable manhood of London attended it.

Now, in fact, was the time of her greatest prosperity; and her husband, gathering these fashionable characters about him, extended his "agency" considerably, and began to thank his stars that he had married a woman who was as good as a fortune to him.

In extending his agency, however, Mr. Walker increased his expenses proportionably, and multiplied his debts accordingly. More furniture and more plate, more wines and more dinner-parties became necessary; the little pony-phaeton was exchanged for a brougham of evenings; and we may fancy our old friend Mr. Eglantine's rage and disgust, as he looked up from the pit of the Opera, to see Mrs. Walker surrounded by what he called "the swell young nobs" about London, bowing to my lord, and laughing with his grace, and led to her carriage by Sir John.

The Ravenswing's position at this period was rather an exceptional one. She was an honest woman, visited by that peculiar class of our aristocracy who chiefly associate with ladies who are *not* honest. She laughed with all, but she encouraged none. Old Crump was constantly at her side

now when she appeared in public, the most watchful of mammas, always awake at the Opera, though she seemed to be always asleep; but no dandy debauchee could deceive her vigilance, and for this reason Walker, who disliked her (as every man naturally will, must, and should dislike his mother-in-law), was contented to suffer her in his house to act as a *chaperon* to Morgiana.

None of the young dandies ever got admission of mornings to the little mansion in the Edgeware Road. The blinds were always down; and though you might hear Morgiana's voice half across the Park as she was practising, yet the youthful hall-porter in the sugar-loaf buttons was instructed to deny her, and always declared that his mistress was gone out, with the most admirable assurance.

After some two years of her life of splendour, there were, to be sure, a good number of morning visitors, who came with *single* knocks, and asked for Captain Walker; but these were no more admitted than the dandies aforesaid, and were referred, generally, to the Captain's office, whither they went or not at their convenience. The only man who obtained admission into the house was Baroski, whose cab transported him thrice a week to the neighbourhood of Connaught Square, and who obtained ready entrance in his professional capacity.

But even then, and much to the wicked little music master's disappointment, the dragon Crump was always at the piano with her endless worsted-work, or else reading her unfailing *Sunday Times*, and Baroski could only employ "de langvitch of de ice," as he called it, with his fair pupil, who used to mimic his manner of rolling his eyes about afterwards, and perform "Baroski in love," for the amusement of her husband and her mamma. The former had his reasons for overlooking the attentions of the little music master; and as for the latter, had she not been on the stage, and had not many hundreds of persons, in jest or earnest, made love to her? What else can a pretty woman expect who is much before the public? And so the worthy mother counselled her daughter to bear these attentions with good-humour, rather than to make them a subject of perpetual alarm and quarrel.

Baroski, then, was allowed to go on being in love, and was never in the least disturbed in his passion; and if he was not successful, at least the little wretch could have the pleasure of *hinting* that he was, and looking particularly roguish when the Ravenswing was named, and assuring his friends at the club that "upon his vort dere vas no trut *in dat rebort.*"

At last one day it happened that Mrs. Crump did not arrive in time for her daughter's lesson (perhaps it rained, and the omnibus was full—a smaller circumstance than that has changed a whole life ere now)—Mrs. Crump did not arrive, and Baroski did; and Morgiana, seeing no great harm, sat down to her lesson as usual, and in the midst of it down went the music master on his knees, and made a declaration in the most eloquent terms he could muster.

"Don't be a fool, Baroski!" said the lady—(I can't help it if her language was not more choice, and if she did not rise with cold dignity, exclaiming, "Unhand me, sir!")—"don't be a fool!" said Mrs. Walker, "but get up and let's finish the lesson."

"You hard-hearted adorable little greature, vill you not listen to me?"

"No, I will not listen to you, Benjamin!" concluded the lady; "get up and take a chair, and don't go on in that ridiklous way, don't!"

But Baroski, having a speech by heart, determined to deliver himself of it in that posture, and begged Morgiana not to turn avay her divine hice, and to listen to de voice of his despair, and so forth. He seized the lady's hand, and was going to press it to his lips, when she said, with more spirit perhaps than grace,—

"Leave go my hand, sir; I'll box your ears if you don't!"

But Baroski wouldn't release her hand, and was proceeding to imprint a kiss upon it, and Mrs. Crump, who had taken the omnibus at a quarter past twelve instead of that at twelve, had just opened the drawing-room door and was walking in, when Morgiana, turning as red as a peony, and unable to disengage her left hand, which the musician held, raised up her right hand, and, with all her might and main, gave her lover such a tremendous slap in the face as caused

him abruptly to release the hand which he held, and would have laid him prostrate on the carpet but for Mrs. Crump, who rushed forward and prevented him from falling by administering right and left a whole shower of slaps, such as he had never endured since the day he was at school.

"What imperence!" said that worthy lady; "you'll lay hands on my daughter, will you?" (one, two). "You'll insult a woman in distress, will you, you little coward?" (one, two). "Take that, and mind your manners, you filthy monster!"

Baroski bounced up in a fury. "By Chofe, you shall hear of dis!" shouted he; "you shall pay me dis!"

"As many more as you please, little Benjamin," cried the widow. "Augustus" (to the page), "was that the Captain's knock?" At this Baroski made for his hat. "Augustus, show this imperence to the door, and if he tries to come in again, call a policeman: do you hear?"

The music master vanished very rapidly, and the two ladies, instead of being frightened or falling into hysterics, as their betters would have done, laughed at the odious monster's discomfiture, as they called him. "Such a man as that set himself up against my Howard!" said Morgiana, with becoming pride; but it was agreed between them that Howard should know nothing of what had occurred, for fear of quarrels, or lest he should be annoyed. So when he came home not a word was said; and only that his wife met him with more warmth than usual, you could not have guessed that anything extraordinary had occurred. It is not my fault that my heroine's sensibilities were not more keen, that she had not the least occasion for sal-volatile or symptom of a fainting fit; but so it was, and Mr. Howard Walker knew nothing of the quarrel between his wife and her instructor, until.....

Until he was arrested next day, at the suit of Benjamin Baroski, for two hundred and twenty guineas, and, in default of payment, was conducted by Mr. Tobias Larkins to his principal's lock-up house in Chancery Lane.

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH MR. WALKER FALLS INTO DIFFICULTIES, AND MRS. WALKER MAKES MANY FOOLISH ATTEMPTS TO RESCUE HIM.

I HOPE the beloved reader is not silly enough to imagine that Mr. Walker, on finding himself insponged for debt in Chancery Lane, was so foolish as to think of applying to any of his friends (those great personages who have appeared every now and then in the course of this little history, and have served to give it a fashionable air). No, no; he knew the world too well, and that, though Billingsgate would give him as many dozen of claret as he could carry away under his belt, as the phrase is (I can't help it, Madam, if the phrase is not more genteel), and though Vauxhall would lend him his carriage, slap him on the back, and dine at his house, their lordships would have seen Mr. Walker depending from a beam in front of the Old Bailey rather than have helped him to a hundred pounds.

And why, forsooth, should we expect otherwise in the world? I observe that men who complain of its selfishness are quite as selfish as the world is, and no more liberal of money than their neighbours; and I am quite sure with regard to Captain Walker that he would have treated a friend in want exactly as he when in want was treated. There was only his lady who was in the least afflicted by his captivity; and as for the club, that went on, we are bound to say, exactly as it did on the day previous to his disappearance.

By the way, about clubs: could we not, but for fear of detaining the fair reader too long, enter into a wholesome dissertation here, on the manner of friendship established in those institutions, and the noble feeling of selfishness which they are likely to encourage in the male race? I put out of the question the stale topics of complaint, such as leaving home, encouraging gormandizing and luxurious habits, etc.; but look also at the dealings of club-men with one another. Look at the rush for the evening paper! See how Shiverton orders a fire in the dog days, and Swettenham opens the windows in February! See how Cramley takes the whole breast of the turkey on his plate, and how many

times Jenkins sends away his beggarly half-pint of sherry! Clubbery is organized egotism. Club intimacy is carefully and wonderfully removed from friendship. You meet Smith for twenty years, exchange the day's news with him, laugh with him over the last joke, grow as well acquainted as two men may be together; and one day, at the end of the list of members of the club, you read, in a little paragraph by itself, with all the honours—

MEMBER DECEASED.

Smith, John, Esq.

Or he, on the other hand, has the advantage of reading your own name selected for a similar typographical distinction. There it is, that abominable little exclusive list at the end of every club catalogue; you can't avoid it. I belong to eight clubs myself, and know that one year Fitz-Boodle, George Savage, Esq. (unless it should please fate to remove my brother and his six sons, when, of course, it would be Fitz-Boodle, Sir George Savage, Bart.), will appear in the dismal category. There is that list; down I must go in it: the day will come, and I shan't be seen in the bow-window, some one else will be sitting in the vacant armchair; the rubber will begin as usual, and yet somehow Fitz will not be there. "Where's Fitz?" says Trumpington, just arrived from the Rhine. "Don't you know?" says Punter, turning down his thumb to the carpet. "You led the club, I think?" says Ruff to his partner (the *other* partner!), and the waiter snuffs the candles.

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I hope, in the course of the above little pause, every single member of a club who reads this has profited by the perusal. He may belong, I say, to eight clubs: he will die and not be missed by any of the five thousand members. Peace be to him! the waiters will forget him, and his name will pass away, and another greatcoat will hang on the hook whence his own used to be dependent.

And this, I need not say, is the beauty of the club institutions. If it were otherwise—if, forsooth, we were to be sorry when our friends died, or to draw out our purses when our

the King's Bench were likely to terrify), and drank several glasses of punch in company with his host, with whom in perfect calmness he talked over his affairs. That he intended to pay his debt and quit the sponging-house next day is a matter of course; no one ever was yet put in a sponging-house that did not pledge his veracity he intended to quit it to-morrow. Mr. Bendigo said he should be heartily glad to open the door to him, and in the meantime sent out diligently to see among his friends if there were any more detainers against the Captain, and to inform the Captain's creditors to come forward against him.

Morgiana went home in profound grief, it may be imagined, and could hardly refrain from bursting into tears when the sugar-loaf page asked whether master was coming home early, or whether he had taken his key. She lay awake, tossing and wretched the whole night, and very early in the morning rose up, and dressed, and went out.

Before nine o'clock she was in Cursitor Street, and once more joyfully bounced into her husband's arms, who woke up yawning and swearing somewhat, with a severe headache, occasioned by the jollification of the previous night: for, strange though it may seem, there are perhaps no places in Europe where jollity is more practised than in prisons for debt; and I declare, for my own part (I mean, of course, that I went to visit a friend), I have dined at Mr. Aminadab's as sumptuously as at Long's.

But it is necessary to account for Morgiana's joyfulness, which was strange in her husband's perplexity, and after her sorrow of the previous night. Well, then, when Mrs. Walker went out in the morning, she did so with a very large basket under her arm. "Shall I carry the basket, ma'am?" said the page, seizing it with much alacrity.

"No, thank you," cried his mistress, with equal eagerness, "it's only——"

"Of course, ma'am," replied the boy, sneering, "I knew it was that."

"Glass," continued Mrs. Walker, turning extremely red. "Have the goodness to call a coach, sir, and not to speak till you are questioned."

The young gentleman disappeared upon his errand; the

coach was called and came. Mrs. Walker slipped into it with her basket, and the page went downstairs to his companions in the kitchen and said, "It's a-comin'! master's in quod, and missis has gone out to pawn the plate." When the cook went out that day, she somehow had by mistake placed in her basket a dozen of table-knives and a plated egg-stand. When the lady's-maid took a walk in the course of the afternoon, she found she had occasion for eight cambric pocket-handkerchiefs (marked with her mistress's cipher), half a dozen pair of shoes, gloves long and short, some silk stockings, and a gold-headed scent-bottle. "Both the new Cashmeres is gone," said she, "and there's nothing left in Mrs. Walker's trinket-box but a paper of pins and an old coral bracelet." As for the page, he rushed incontinently to his master's dressing-room, and examined every one of the pockets of his clothes; made a parcel of some of them, and opened all the drawers which Walker had not locked before his departure. He only found three half-pence and a bill-stamp, and about forty-five tradesmen's accounts, neatly labelled and tied up with red tape. These three worthies, a groom, who was a great admirer of Trimmer, the lady's-maid, and a policeman, a friend of the cook's, sat down to a comfortable dinner at the usual hour, and it was agreed among them all that Walker's ruin was certain. The cook made the policeman a present of a china punch-bowl which Mrs. Walker had given her; and the lady's-maid gave her friend the "Book of Beauty" for last year, and the third volume of Byron's poems from the drawing-room table.

"I'm dashed if she ain't taken the little French clock, too," said the page. And so indeed Mrs. Walker had; it slipped in the basket, where it lay enveloped in one of her shawls, and then struck madly and unnaturally a great number of times, as Morgiana was lifting her store of treasures out of the hackney-coach. The coachman wagged his head sadly as he saw her walking as quick as she could under her heavy load, and disappearing round the corner of the street at which Mr. Balls' celebrated jewellery establishment is situated. It is a grand shop, with magnificent silver cups and salvers, rare gold-headed canes, flutes, watches, diamond brooches, and a

few fine specimens of the old masters in the window, and under the words—

BALLS, JEWELLER,

you read,

Money Lent,

in the very smallest type, on the door.

The interview with Mr. Balls need not be described, but it must have been a satisfactory one, for at the end of half an hour Morgiana returned and bounded into the coach with sparkling eyes, and told the driver to *gallop* to Cursitor Street, which, smiling, he promised to do, and accordingly set off in that direction at the rate of four miles an hour. "I thought so," said the philosophic charioteer. "When a man's in quod, a woman don't mind her silver spoons;" and he was so delighted with her action, that he forgot to grumble when she came to settle accounts with him, even though she gave him only double his fare.

"Take me to him," said she to the young Hebrew who opened the door.

"To whom?" said the sarcastic youth; "there's twenty *hims* here. You're precious early."

"To Captain Walker, young man," replied Morgiana haughtily; whereupon the youth, opening the second door, and seeing Mr. Bendigo in a flowered dressing-gown descending the stairs, exclaimed, "Papa, here's a lady for the Captain." "I'm come to free him," said she, trembling and holding out a bundle of bank-notes. "Here's the amount of your claim, sir—two hundred and twenty guineas, as you told me last night." The Jew took the notes, and grinned as he looked at her, and grinned double as he looked at his son, and begged Mrs. Walker to step into his study and take a receipt. When the door of that apartment closed upon the lady and his father, Mr. Bendigo the younger fell back in an agony of laughter, which it is impossible to describe in words, and presently ran out into a court where some of the luckless inmates of the house were already taking the air, and communicated something to them which made those individuals also laugh as uproariously as he had previously done.

Well, after joyfully taking the receipt from Mr. Bendigo

(how her cheeks flushed and her heart fluttered as she dried it on the blotting-book !), and after turning very pale again on hearing that the Captain had had a very bad night—"And well he might, poor dear!" said she (at which Mr. Bendigo, having no person to grin at, grinned at a marble bust of Mr. Pitt, which ornamented his sideboard)—Morgiana, I say, these preliminaries being concluded, was conducted to her husband's apartment, and once more flinging her arms round her dearest Howard's neck, told him, with one of the sweetest smiles in the world, to make haste and get up and come home, for breakfast was waiting and the carriage at the door.

"What do you mean, love?" said the Captain, starting up and looking exceedingly surprised.

"I mean that my dearest is free; that the odious little creature is paid—at least the horrid bailiff is."

"Have you been to Baroski?" said Walker, turning very red.

"Howard!" said his wife, quite indignant.

"Did—did your mother give you the money?" asked the Captain.

"No; I had it by me," replied Mrs. Walker, with a very knowing look.

Walker was more surprised than ever. "Have you any more money by you?" said he.

Mrs. Walker showed him her purse with two guineas. "That is all, love," she said. "And I wish," continued she, "you would give me a draft to pay a whole list of little bills that have somehow all come in within the last few days."

"Well, well, you shall have the cheque," continued Mr. Walker, and began forthwith to make his toilet; which completed, he rung for Mr. Bendigo and his bill, and intimated his wish to go home directly.

The honoured bailiff brought the bill, but with regard to his being free, said it was impossible.

"How impossible?" said Mrs. Walker, turning very red and then very pale. "Did I not pay just now?"

"So you did, and you've got the reshipt; but there's another detainer against the Captain for a hundred and fifty. Eglantine and Mossrose, of Bond Street—perfumery for five years, you know."

"You don't mean to say you were such a fool as to pay without asking if there were any more detainers?" roared Walker to his wife.

"Yes, she was though," chuckled Mr. Bendigo. "But she'll know better the next time; and besides, Captain, what's a hundred and fifty pounds to you?"

Though Walker desired nothing so much in the world at that moment as the liberty to knock down his wife, his sense of prudence overcame his desire for justice; if that feeling may be called prudence on his part, which consisted in a strong wish to cheat the bailiff into the idea that he (Walker) was an exceedingly respectable and wealthy man. Many worthy persons indulge in this fond notion, that they are imposing upon the world—strive to fancy, for instance, that their bankers consider them men of property because they keep a tolerable balance, pay little tradesmen's bills with ostentatious punctuality, and so forth; but the world, let us be pretty sure, is as wise as need be, and guesses our real condition with a marvellous instinct, or learns it with curious skill. The London tradesman is one of the keenest judges of human nature extant; and if a tradesman, how much more a bailiff? In reply to the ironic question, "What's a hundred and fifty pounds to you?" Walker, collecting himself, answers, "It is an infamous imposition, and I owe the money no more than you do; but, nevertheless, I shall instruct my lawyers to pay it in the course of the morning—under protest, of course."

"Oh, of course," said Mr. Bendigo, bowing and quitting the room, and leaving Mrs. Walker to the pleasure of a *tête-à-tête* with her husband.

And now being alone with the partner of his bosom, the worthy gentleman began an address to her which cannot be put down on paper here, because the world is exceedingly squeamish, and does not care to hear the whole truth about rascals, and because the fact is that almost every other word of the Captain's speech was a curse, such as would shock the beloved reader were it put in print.

Fancy, then, in lieu of the conversation, a scoundrel disappointed and in a fury, wreaking his brutal revenge upon an amiable woman, who sits trembling and pale, and wondering

at this sudden exhibition of wrath. Fancy how he clenches his fists and stands over her, and stamps and screams out curses with a livid face, growing wilder and wilder in his rage; wrenching her hand when she wants to turn away, and only stopping at last when she has fallen off the chair in a fainting fit, with a heart-breaking sob that made the Jew-boy who was listening at the key-hole turn quite pale and walk away. Well, it *is* best, perhaps, that such a conversation should not be told at length: at the end of it, when Mr. Walker had his wife lifeless on the floor, he seized a water-jug and poured it over her; which operation pretty soon brought her to herself, and shaking her black ringlets, she looked up once more again timidly into his face, and took his hand, and began to cry.

He spoke now in a somewhat softer voice, and let her keep paddling on with his hand as before; he *couldn't* speak very fiercely to the poor girl in her attitude of defeat, and tenderness, and supplication. "Morgiana," said he, "your extravagance and carelessness have brought me to ruin, I'm afraid. If you'd chosen to have gone to Baroski, a word from you would have made him withdraw the writ, and my property wouldn't have been sacrificed, as it has now been, for nothing. It mayn't be yet too late, however, to retrieve ourselves. This bill of Eglantine's is a regular conspiracy, I am sure, between Mossrose and Bendigo here. You must go to Eglantine; he's an old—an old flame of yours, you know."

She dropped his hand. "I can't go to Eglantine after what has passed between us," she said; but Walker's face instantly began to wear a certain look, and she said with a shudder, "Well, well, dear, I *will* go." "You will go to Eglantine, and ask him to take a bill for the amount of this shameful demand—at any date, never mind what. Mind, however, to see him alone, and I'm sure if you choose you can settle the business. Make haste; set off directly, and come back, as there may be more detainers in."

Trembling, and in a great flutter, Morgiana put on her bonnet and gloves, and went towards the door. "It's a fine morning," said Mr. Walker, looking out; "a walk will do you good. And—Morgiana—didn't you say you had a couple of guineas in your pocket?"

"Here it is," said she, smiling all at once, and holding up her face to be kissed. She paid the two guineas for the kiss. Was it not a mean act? "Is it possible that people can love where they do not respect?" says Miss Prim: "*I* never would." Nobody asked you, Miss Prim; but recollect Morgiana was not born with your advantages of education and breeding, and was, in fact, a poor vulgar creature, who loved Mr. Walker, not because her mamma told her, nor because he was an exceedingly eligible and well-brought-up young man, but because she could not help it, and knew no better. Nor is Mrs. Walker set up as a model of virtue. Ah no! when I want a model of virtue I will call in Baker Street, and ask for a sitting of my dear (if I may be permitted to say so) Miss Prim.

We have Mr. Howard Walker safely housed in Mr. Bendigo's establishment in Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane; and it looks like mockery and want of feeling towards the excellent hero of this story (or, as should rather be said, towards the husband of the heroine), to say what he *might* have been but for the unlucky little circumstance of Baroski's passion for Morgiana.

If Baroski had not fallen in love with Morgiana, he would not have given her two hundred guineas' worth of lessons; he would not have so far presumed as to seize her hand and attempt to kiss it; if he had not attempted to kiss her, she would not have boxed his ears; he would not have taken out the writ against Walker; Walker would have been free, very possibly rich, and therefore certainly respected. He always said that a month's more liberty would have set him beyond the reach of misfortune.

The assertion is very likely a correct one; for Walker had a flashy, enterprising genius, which ends in wealth sometimes, in the King's Bench not seldom, occasionally, alas, in Van Diemen's Land! He might have been rich, could he have kept his credit, and had not his personal expenses and extravagances pulled him down. He had gallantly availed himself of his wife's fortune; nor could any man in London, as he proudly said, have made five hundred pounds go so far. He had, as we have seen, furnished a house, sideboard, and cellar with it; he had a carriage, and horses in his stable;

and with the remainder he had purchased shares in four companies—of three of which he was founder and director—had conducted innumerable bargains in the foreign stocks, had lived and entertained sumptuously, and made himself a very considerable income. He had set up THE CAPITOL Loan and Life Assurance Company, had discovered the Chimborazo gold mines, and the Society for Recovering and Draining the Pontine Marshes—capital, ten millions—patron, HIS HOLINESS THE POPE. It certainly was stated in an evening paper that His Holiness had made him a Knight of the Spur, and had offered to him the rank of Count; and he was raising a loan for his Highness the Cacique of Panama, who has sent him (by way of dividend) the grand cordon of his Highness's Order of the Castle and Falcon, which might be seen any day at his office in Bond Street, with the parchments signed and sealed by the Grand Master and Falcon King-at-Arms of his Highness. In a week more, Walker would have raised a hundred thousand pounds on his Highness's twenty per cent. loan; he would have had fifteen thousand pounds commission for himself; his companies would have risen to par, he would have realized his shares; he would have gone into Parliament; he would have been made a baronet, who knows? a peer, probably! "And I appeal to you, sir," Walker would say to his friends, "could any man have shown better proof of his affection for his wife than by laying out her little miserable money as I did? They call me heartless, sir, because I didn't succeed. Sir, my life has been a series of sacrifices for that woman, such as no man ever performed before."

A proof of Walker's dexterity and capability for business may be seen in the fact that he had actually appeased and reconciled one of his bitterest enemies—our honest friend Eglantine. After Walker's marriage, Eglantine, who had now no mercantile dealings with his former agent, became so enraged with him that, as the only means of revenge in his power, he sent him in his bill for goods supplied to the amount of one hundred and fifty guineas, and sued him for the amount. But Walker stepped boldly over to his enemy, and in the course of half an hour they were friends.

Eglantine promised to forego his claim, and accepted in

lieu of it three £100 shares of the ex-Panama stock, bearing 25 per cent., payable half-yearly at the house of Hocus Brothers, St. Swithin's Lane; three £100 shares, and the *second* class of the Order of the Castle and Falcon, with the riband and badge. "In four years, Eglantine, my boy, I hope to get you the Grand Cordon of the order," said Walker. "I hope to see you a KNIGHT GRAND CROSS, with a grant of a hundred thousand acres reclaimed from the Isthmus."

To do my poor Eglantine justice, he did not care for the hundred thousand acres; it was the star that delighted him. Ah! how his fat chest heaved with delight as he sewed on the cross and riband to his dress-coat, and lighted up four wax candles and looked at himself in the glass. He was known to wear a greatcoat after that; it was that he might wear the cross under it. That year he went on a trip to Boulogne. He was dreadfully ill during the voyage, but as the vessel entered the port he was seen to emerge from the cabin, his coat open, the star blazing on his chest. The soldiers saluted him as he walked the streets; he was called Monsieur le Chevalier; and when he went home he entered into negotiations with Walker to purchase a commission in his Highness's service. Walker said he would get him the nominal rank of Captain; the fees at the Panama *War Office* were five-and-twenty pounds, which sum honest Eglantine produced, and had his commission, and a pack of visiting cards printed as Captain Archibald Eglantine, K.C.F. Many a time he looked at them as they lay in his desk, and he kept the cross in his dressing-table, and wore it as he shaved every morning.

His Highness the Cacique, it is well known, came to England, and had lodgings in Regent Street, where he held a levee, at which Eglantine appeared in the Panama uniform, and was most graciously received by his Sovereign. His Highness proposed to make Captain Eglantine his aide-de-camp with the rank of Colonel; but the Captain's exchequer was rather low at that moment, and the fees at the "War Office" were peremptory. Meanwhile his Highness left Regent Street; was said by some to have returned to Panama, by others to be in his native city of Cork, by others

to be leading a life of retirement in the New Cut, Lambeth; at any rate was not visible for some time, so that Captain Eglantine's advancement did not take place. Eglantine was somehow ashamed to mention his military and chivalric rank to Mr. Mossrose, when that gentleman came into partnership with him, and left these facts secret, until they were detected by a very painful circumstance. On the very day when Walker was arrested at the suit of Benjamin Baroski, there appeared in the newspapers an account of the imprisonment of his Highness the Prince of Panama, for a bill owing to a licensed victualler in Ratcliff Highway. The magistrate to whom the victualler subsequently came to complain passed many pleasantries on the occasion. He asked whether his Highness did not drink like a swan with two necks; whether he had brought any belles savages with him from Panama, and so forth; and the whole court, said the report, "was convulsed with laughter, when Boniface produced a green and yellow riband with a large star of the Order of the Castle and Falcon, with which his Highness proposed to gratify him, in lieu of paying his little bill."

It was as he was reading the above document with a bleeding heart that Mr. Mossrose came in from his daily walk to the City. "Vell, Eglantine," says he, "have you heard the newsh?"

"About his Highness?"

"About your friend Valker; he's arrested for two hundred poundsh!"

Eglantine at this could contain no more, but told his story of how he had been induced to accept £300 of Panama stock for his account against Walker, and cursed his stars for his folly.

"Vell, you've only to bring in another bill," said the younger perfumer; "swear he owes you a hundred and fifty pounds, and we'll have a writ out against him this afternoon."

And so a second writ was taken out against Captain Walker.

"You'll have his wife here very likely in a day or two," said Mr. Mossrose to his partner; "them chaps always sends their wives, and I hope you know how to deal with her."

"I don't value her a fig's head," said Eglantine. "I'll treat her like the dust of the hearth. After that woman's conduct to me, I should like to see her have the haudacity to come here; and if she does, you'll see how I'll serve her."

The worthy perfumer was, in fact, resolved to be exceedingly hard-hearted in his behaviour towards his old love, and acted over at night in bed the scene which was to occur when the meeting should take place. Oh, thought he, but it will be a grand thing to see the proud Morgiana on her knees to me, and me a-pointing to the door, and saying, "Madam, you've steeled this 'eart against you, you have. Bury the recollection of old times—of those old times when I thought my 'eart would have broke, but it didn't. No, 'earts are made of sterner stuff. I didn't die, as I thought I should. I stood it; and live to see the woman I despised at my feet—ha, ha, at my feet!"

In the midst of these thoughts Mr. Eglantine fell asleep; but it was evident that the idea of seeing Morgiana once more agitated him considerably, else why should he have been at the pains of preparing so much heroism? His sleep was exceedingly fitful and troubled. He saw Morgiana in a hundred shapes; he dreamed that he was dressing her hair; that he was riding with her to Richmond; that the horse turned into a dragon, and Morgiana into Woolsey, who took him by the throat and choked him, while the dragon played the key-bugle. And in the morning, when Mossrose was gone to his business in the City, and he sat reading the *Morning Post* in his study, ah! what a thump his heart gave as the lady of his dreams actually stood before him.

Many a lady who purchased brushes at Eglantine's shop would have given ten guineas for such a colour as his when he saw her. His heart beat violently, he was almost choking in his stays. He had been prepared for the visit, but his courage failed him now it had come. They were both silent for some minutes.

"You know what I am come for," at last said Morgiana from under her veil, but she put it aside as she spoke.

"I—that is—yes—it's a painful affair, mem," he said, giving one look at her pale face, and then turning away in a

flurry. "I beg to refer you to Blunt, Hone, and Sharpus, my lawyers, mem," he added, collecting himself.

"I didn't expect this from *you*, Mr. Eglantine," said the lady, and began to sob.

"And after what's 'appened, I didn't expect a visit from *you*, mem. I thought Mrs. Capting Walker was too great a dame to visit poor Harchibald Eglantine (though some of the first men in the country *do* visit him). Is there anything in which I can oblige you, mem?"

"O heavens!" cried the poor woman, "have I no friend left? I never thought that you, too, would have deserted me, Mr. Archibald."

The "Archibald," pronounced in the old way, had evidently an effect on the perfumer; he winced, and looked at her very eagerly for a moment. "What can I do for you, mem?" at last said he.

"What is this bill against Mr. Walker, for which he is now in prison?"

"Perfumery supplied for five years. That man used more 'airbrushes than any duke in the land; and as for eau de Cologne, he must have bathed himself in it. He hordered me about like a lord. He never paid me one shilling; he stabbed me in my most vital part—but, ah! ah! never mind *that:* and I said I would be revenged, and I *am*."

The perfumer was quite in a rage again by this time, and wiped his fat face with his pocket-handkerchief, and glared upon Mrs. Walker with a most determined air.

"Revenged on whom? Archibald—Mr. Eglantine, revenged on me—on a poor woman whom you made miserable! You would not have done so once."

"Ha! and a precious way you treated me *once*," said Eglantine. "Don't talk to me, mem, of *once*. Bury the recollection of once for hever! I thought my 'eart would have broke once; but no, 'earts are made of sterner stuff. I didn't die, as I thought I should. I stood it; and I live to see the woman who despised me at my feet."

"Oh, Archibald!" was all the lady could say, and she fell to sobbing again; it was perhaps her best argument with the perfumer.

"Oh, Harchibald, indeed!" continued he, beginning to

swell; "don't call me Harchibald, Morgiana. Think what a position you might have held, if you'd chose, when, when—you *might* have called me Harchibald. Now it's no use," added he, with harrowing pathos; "but, though I've been wronged, I can't bear to see women in tears. Tell me what I can do?"

"Dear, good Mr. Eglantine, send to your lawyers and stop this horrid prosecution—take Mr. Walker's acknowledgment for the debt. If he is free, he is sure to have a very large sum of money in a few days, and will pay you all. Do not ruin him—do not ruin me by persisting now. Be the old kind Eglantine you were."

Eglantine took a hand, which Morgiana did not refuse; he thought about old times. He had known her since childhood almost. As a girl he had dandled her on his knee at the "Kidneys;" as a woman he had adored her: his heart was melted.

"He did pay me in a sort of way," reasoned the perfumer with himself. "These bonds, though they are not worth much, I took 'em for better or for worse; and I can't bear to see her crying, and to trample on a woman in distress. Morgiana," he added, in a loud, cheerful voice, "cheer up! I'll give you a release for your husband. I *will* be the old kind Eglantine I was."

"Be the old kind jackass you vash!" here roared a voice that made Mr. Eglantine start. "Vy, vat an old fat fool you are, Eglantine, to give up our just debts because a voman comes snivelling and crying to you—and such a voman, too!" exclaimed Mr. Mossrose, for his was the voice.

"Such a woman, sir?" cried the senior partner.

"Yes; such a voman. Vy, didn't she jilt you herself? hasn't she been trying the same game with Baroski? and are you so green as to give up a hundred and fifty pounds because she takes a fancy to come vimpering here? I won't, I can tell you. The money's as much mine as it is yours, and I'll have it, or keep Walker's body, that's what I will."

At the presence of his partner, the timid good genius of Eglantine, which had prompted him to mercy and kindness, at once outspread its frightened wings and flew away.

"You see how it is, Mrs. W.," said he, looking down;

"it's an affair of business. In all these here affairs of business Mr. Mossrose is the managing man; ain't you, Mr. Mossrose?"

"A pretty business it would be if I wasn't," replied Mossrose doggedly. "Come, ma'am," says he, "I'll tell you vat I do: I take fifty per shent.; not a farthing less. Give me that, and out your husband goes."

"Oh, sir, Howard will pay you in a week."

"Vell, den let him stop at my uncle Bendigo's for a week, and come out den; he's very comfortable there," said Shylock with a grin. "Hadn't you better go to the shop, Mr. Eglantine," continued he, "and look after your business? Mrs. Walker can't want you to listen to her all day."

Eglantine was glad of the excuse, and slunk out of the studio—not into the shop, but into his parlour, where he drank off a great glass of Maraschino, and sat blushing and exceedingly agitated, until Mossrose came to tell him that Mrs. W. was gone, and wouldn't trouble him any more. But although he drank several more glasses of Maraschino, and went to the play that night, and to the Cider-cellars afterwards, neither the liquor, nor the play, nor the delightful comic songs at the Cellars, could drive Mrs. Walker out of his head, and the memory of old times, and the image of her pale weeping face.

Morgiana tottered out of the shop, scarcely heeding the voice of Mr. Mossrose, who said, "I'll take forty per shent." (and went back to his duty cursing himself for a soft-hearted fool for giving up so much of his rights to a puling woman). Morgiana, I say, tottered out of the shop, and went up Conduit Street, weeping, weeping with all her eyes. She was quite faint, for she had taken nothing that morning but the glass of water which the pastry-cook in the Strand had given her, and was forced to take hold of the railings of a house for support, just as a little gentleman with a yellow handkerchief under his arm was issuing from the door.

"Good heavens, Mrs. Walker!" said the gentleman. It was no other than Mr. Woolsey, who was going forth to try a body-coat for a customer. "Are you ill?—what's the matter? For God's sake come in!" and he took her arm under his and led her into his back-parlour, and seated her, and had

some wine and water before her in one minute, before she had said one single word regarding herself.

As soon as she was somewhat recovered, and with the interruption of a thousand sobs, the poor thing told as well as she could her little story: Mr. Eglantine had arrested Mr. Walker; she had been trying to gain time for him; Eglantine had refused.

"The hard-hearted, cowardly brute to refuse *her* anything!" said loyal Mr. Woolsey. "My dear," says he, "I've no reason to love your husband, and I know too much about him to respect him; but I love and respect *you*, and will spend my last shilling to serve you." At which Morgiana could only take his hand and cry a great deal more than ever. She said Mr. Walker would have a great deal of money in a week; that he was the best of husbands, and she was sure Mr. Woolsey would think better of him when he knew him; that Mr. Eglantine's bill was one hundred and fifty pounds, but that Mr. Mossrose would take forty per cent., if Mr. Woolsey could say how much that was.

"I'll pay a thousand pound to do you good," said Mr. Woolsey, bouncing up. "Stay here for ten minutes, my dear, until my return, and all shall be right, as you will see." He was back in ten minutes, and had called a cab from the stand opposite (all the coachmen there had seen and commented on Mrs. Walker's woe-begone looks), and they were off for Cursitor Street in a moment. "They'll settle the whole debt for twenty pounds," said he, and showed an order to that effect from Mr. Mossrose to Mr. Bendigo, empowering the latter to release Walker on receiving Mr. Woolsey's acknowledgment for the above sum."

* * * * *

"There's no use paying it," said Mr. Walker doggedly; "it would only be robbing you, Mr. Woolsey—seven more detainers have come in while my wife has been away. I must go through the court now. But," he added in a whisper to the tailor, "my good sir, my debts of *honour* are sacred, and if you will have the goodness to lend *me* the twenty pounds, I pledge you my word as a gentleman to return it when I come out of quod."

It is probable that Mr. Woolsey declined this; for, as soon

as he was gone, Walker, in a tremendous fury, began cursing his wife for dawdling three hours on the road. "Why the deuce, ma'am, didn't you take a cab?" roared he, when he heard she had walked to Bond Street. "Those writs have only been in half an hour, and I might have been off but for you."

"Oh, Howard," said she, "didn't you take—didn't I give you my—my last shilling?" and fell back and wept again more bitterly than ever.

"Well, love," said her amiable husband, turning rather red, "never mind; it wasn't your fault. It is but going through the court. It is no great odds. I forgive you."

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH MR. WALKER STILL REMAINS IN DIFFICULTIES, BUT SHOWS GREAT RESIGNATION UNDER HIS MISFORTUNES.

THE exemplary Walker, seeing that escape from his enemies was hopeless, and that it was his duty as a man to turn on them and face them, now determined to quit the splendid though narrow lodgings which Mr. Bendigo had provided for him, and undergo the martyrdom of the Fleet. Accordingly, in company with that gentleman, he came over to his Majesty's prison, and gave himself into the custody of the officers there; and did not apply for the accommodation of the rules (by which in those days the captivity of some debtors was considerably lightened), because he knew perfectly well that there was no person in the wide world who would give a security for the heavy sums for which Walker was answerable. What these sums were is no matter, and on this head we do not think it at all necessary to satisfy the curiosity of the reader. He may have owed hundreds—thousands, his creditors only can tell; he paid the dividend which has been formerly mentioned, and showed thereby his desire to satisfy all claims upon him to the uttermost farthing.

As for the little house in Connaught Square, when, after quitting her husband, Morgiana drove back thither, the door was opened by the page, who instantly thanked her to pay his wages; and in the drawing-room, on a yellow satin sofa,

sat a seedy man (with a pot of porter beside him, placed on an album for fear of staining the rosewood table), and the seedy man signified that he had taken possession of the furniture in execution for a judgment debt. Another seedy man was in the dining-room, reading a newspaper, and drinking gin; he informed Mrs. Walker that he was the representative of another judgment debt and of another execution. "There's another on 'em in the kitchen," said the page, "taking an inwentory of the furniture; and he swears he'll have you took up for swindling, for pawning the plate."

"Sir," said Mr. Woolsey—for that worthy man had conducted Morgiana home—"sir," said he, shaking his stick at the young page, "if you give any more of your impudence, I'll beat every button off your jacket;" and as there were some four hundred of these ornaments, the page was silent. It was a great mercy for Morgiana that the honest and faithful tailor had accompanied her. The good fellow had waited very patiently for her for an hour in the parlour or coffee-room of the lock-up house, knowing full well that she would want a protector on her way homewards; and his kindness will be more appreciated when it is stated that, during the time of his delay in the coffee-room, he had been subject to the entreaties, nay, to the insults of Cornet Fipkin of the Blues, who was in prison at the suit of Linsey, Woolsey, and Co., and who happened to be taking his breakfast in the apartment when his obdurate creditor entered it. The cornet (a hero of eighteen, who stood at least five feet three in his boots, and owed fifteen thousand pounds) was so enraged at the obduracy of his creditor that he said he would have thrown him out of the window but for the bars which guarded it; and entertained serious thoughts of knocking the tailor's head off, but that the latter, putting his right leg forward and his fists in a proper attitude, told the young officer to "come on," on which the cornet cursed the tailor for a "snob," and went back to his breakfast.

The execution people having taken charge of Mr. Walker's house, Mrs. Walker was driven to take refuge with her mamma near "Sadler's Wells," and the Captain remained comfortably lodged in the Fleet. He had some ready money, and with it managed to make his existence exceedingly com-

fortable. He lived with the best society of the place, consisting of several distinguished young noblemen and gentlemen. He spent the morning playing at fives and smoking cigars; the evening, smoking cigars and dining comfortably. Cards came after dinner, and as the Captain was an experienced player, and near a score of years older than most of his friends, he was generally pretty successful; indeed, if he had received all the money that was owed to him, he might have come out of prison and paid his creditors twenty shillings in the pound—that is, if he had been minded to do so. But there is no use in examining into that point too closely; for the fact is, young Fipkin only paid him forty pounds out of seven hundred, for which he gave him I. O. U.'s; Algernon Deuceace not only did not pay him three hundred and twenty which he lost at blind hookey, but actually borrowed seven and sixpence in money from Walker, which has never been repaid to this day; and Lord Doublequits actually lost nineteen thousand pounds to him at heads and tails, which he never paid, pleading drunkenness and his minority. The reader may recollect a paragraph which went the round of the papers entitled, "*Affair of Honour in the Fleet Prison.*—Yesterday morning (behind the pump in the second court) Lord D–bl-qu-ts and Captain H-w-rd W-lk-r (a near relative, we understand, of his Grace the Duke of N-rf-lk) had a hostile meeting and exchanged two shots. These two young sprigs of nobility were attended to the ground by Major Flush, who, by the way, is *flush* no longer, and Captain Pam, late of the —— Dragoons. Play is said to have been the cause of the quarrel, and the gallant Captain is reported to have handled the noble lord's nose rather roughly at one stage of the transactions." When Morgiana at "Sadler's Wells" heard these news, she was ready to faint with terror; and rushed to the Fleet Prison, and embraced her lord and master with her usual expansion and fits of tears: very much to that gentleman's annoyance, who happened to be in company with Pam and Flush at the time, and did not care that his handsome wife should be seen too much in the dubious precincts of the Fleet. He had at least so much shame about him, and had always rejected her entreaties to be allowed to inhabit the prison with him.

"It is enough," would he say, casting his eyes heavenward, and with a most lugubrious countenance—"it is enough, Morgiana, that *I* should suffer, even though your thoughtlessness has been the cause of my ruin. But enough of *that!* I will not rebuke you for faults for which I know you are now repentant; and I never could bear to see you in the midst of the miseries of this horrible place. Remain at home with your mother, and let me drag on the weary days here alone. If you can get me any more of that pale sherry, my love, do. I require something to cheer me in solitude, and have found my chest very much relieved by that wine. Put more pepper and eggs, my dear, into the next veal-pie you make me. I can't eat the horrible messes in the coffee-room here."

It was Walker's wish, I can't tell why, except that it is the wish of a great number of other persons in this strange world, to make his wife believe that he was wretched in mind and ill in health; and all assertions to this effect the simple creature received with numberless tears of credulity, and would go home to Mrs. Crump, and say how her darling Howard was pining away, how he was ruined for *her*, and with what angelic sweetness he bore his captivity. The fact is, he bore it with so much resignation that no other person in the world could see that he was unhappy. His life was undisturbed by duns, his day was his own from morning till night, his diet was good, his acquaintances jovial, his purse tolerably well supplied, and he had not one single care to annoy him.

Mrs. Crump and Woolsey, perhaps, received Morgiana's account of her husband's miseries with some incredulity. The latter was now a daily visitor to "Sadler's Wells." His love for Morgiana had become a warm, fatherly, generous regard for her. It was out of the honest fellow's cellar that the wine used to come which did so much good to Mr. Walker's chest; and he tried a thousand ways to make Morgiana happy.

A very happy day, indeed, it was when, returning from her visit to the Fleet, she found in her mother's sitting-room her dear grand rosewood piano, and every one of her music-books, which the kind-hearted tailor had purchased at the sale of Walker's effects. And I am not ashamed to say that Morgiana herself was so charmed, that when, as usual, Mr.

Woolsey came to drink tea in the evening, she actually gave him a kiss; which frightened Mr. Woolsey, and made him blush exceedingly. She sat down, and played him that evening every one of the songs which he liked—the *old* songs—none of your Italian stuff. Podmore, the old music master, was there too, and was delighted and astonished at the progress in singing which Morgiana had made; and when the little party separated, he took Mr. Woolsey by the hand, and said, "Give me leave to tell you, sir, that you're a *trump*."

"That he is," said Canterfield, the first tragic; "an honour to human nature; a man whose hand is open as day to melting charity, and whose heart ever melts at the tale of woman's distress."

"Pooh, pooh, stuff and nonsense, sir," said the tailor; but, upon my word, Mr. Canterfield's words were perfectly correct. I wish as much could be said in favour of Woolsey's old rival, Mr. Eglantine, who attended the sale too, but it was with a horrid kind of satisfaction at the thought that Walker was ruined. He bought the yellow satin sofa before mentioned, and transferred it to what he calls his "sitting-room," where it is to this day, bearing many marks of the best bear's-grease. Woolsey bid against Baroski for the piano, very nearly up to the actual value of the instrument, when the artist withdrew from competition; and when he was sneering at the ruin of Mr. Walker, the tailor sternly interrupted him by saying, "What the deuce are *you* sneering at? You did it, sir; and you're paid every shilling of your claim, ain't you?" On which Baroski turned round to Miss Larkins, and said, "Mr. Woolsey was a 'snop;'" the very word, though pronounced somewhat differently, which the gallant Cornet Fipkin had applied to him.

Well, so he *was* a snob. But, vulgar as he was, I declare, for my part, that I have a greater respect for Mr. Woolsey than for any single nobleman or gentleman mentioned in this true history.

It will be seen from the names of Messrs. Canterfield and Podmore that Morgiana was again in the midst of the widow Crump's favourite theatrical society; and this, indeed, was the case. The widow's little room was hung round with the

pictures which were mentioned at the commencement of the story as decorating the bar of the "Bootjack;" and several times in a week she received her friends from the "Wells," and entertained them with such humble refreshments of tea and crumpets as her modest means permitted her to purchase. Among these persons Morgiana lived and sung quite as contentedly as she had ever done among the demireps of her husband's society, and—only she did not dare to own it to herself—was a great deal happier than she had been for many a day. Mrs. Captain Walker was still a great lady amongst them. Even in his ruin, Walker, the director of three companies, and the owner of the splendid pony-chaise, was to these simple persons an awful character; and when mentioned, they talked with a great deal of gravity of his being in the country, and hoped Mrs. Captain W. had good news of him. They all knew he was in the Fleet; but had he not in prison fought a duel with a viscount? Montmorency (of the Norfolk circuit) was in the Fleet too; and when Canterfield went to see poor Montey, the latter had pointed out Walker to his friend, who actually hit Lord George Tennison across the shoulders in play with a racket-bat, which event was soon made known to the whole green-room.

"They had me up one day," said Montmorency, "to sing a comic song, and give my recitations; and we had champagne and lobster-salad—*such* nobs!" added the player. "Billingsgate and Vauxhall were there too, and left college at eight o'clock."

When Morgiana was told of the circumstance by her mother, she hoped her dear Howard had enjoyed the evening, and was thankful that for once he could forget his sorrows. Nor, somehow, was she ashamed of herself for being happy afterwards, but gave way to her natural good-humour without repentance or self-rebuke. I believe, indeed (alas! why are we made acquainted with the same fact regarding ourselves long after it is past and gone?)—I believe these were the happiest days of Morgiana's whole life. She had no cares except the pleasant one of attending on her husband; an easy, smiling temperament, which made her regardless of to-morrow; and, add to this, a delightful hope

relative to a certain interesting event which was about to occur, and which I shall not particularize further than by saying, that she was cautioned against too much singing by Mr. Squills, her medical attendant, and that widow Crump was busy making up a vast number of little caps and diminutive cambric shirts, such as delighted *grandmothers* are in the habit of fashioning. I hope this is as genteel a way of signifying the circumstance which was about to take place in the Walker family as Miss Prim herself could desire. Mrs. Walker's mother was about to become a grandmother. There's a phrase! The *Morning Post*, which says this story is vulgar, I'm sure cannot quarrel with *that*. I don't believe the whole *Court Guide* would convey an intimation more delicately.

Well, Mrs. Crump's little grandchild was born, entirely to the dissatisfaction, I must say, of his father, who, when the infant was brought to him in the Fleet, had him abruptly covered up in his cloak again, from which he had been removed by the jealous prison door-keepers—why, do you think? Walker had a quarrel with one of them, and the wretch persisted in believing that the bundle Mrs. Crump was bringing to her son-in-law was a bundle of disguised brandy!

"The brutes!" said the lady; "and the father's a brute, too," said she. "He takes no more notice of me than if I was a kitchen-maid, and of Woolsey than if he was a leg of mutton—the dear, blessed little cherub!"

Mrs. Crump was a mother-in-law; let us pardon her hatred of her daughter's husband.

The Woolsey compared in the above sentence both to a leg of mutton and a cherub, was not the eminent member of the firm of Linsey, Woolsey, and Co., but the little baby, who was christened Howard Woolsey Walker, with the full consent of the father, who said the tailor was a deuced good fellow, and felt really obliged to him for the sherry, for a frock-coat which he let him have in prison, and for his kindness to Morgiana. The tailor loved the little boy with all his soul; he attended his mother to her churching, and the child to the font; and, as a present to his little godson on his christening, he sent two yards of the finest white kersey-

mere in his shop to make him a cloak. The Duke had had a pair of inexpressibles off that very piece.

House furniture is bought and sold, music lessons are given, children are born and christened, ladies are confined and churched—time, in other words, passes; and yet Captain Walker still remains in prison! Does it not seem strange that he should still languish there between palisaded walls near Fleet Market, and that he should not be restored to that active and fashionable world of which he was an ornament? The fact is, the Captain had been before the Court for the examination of his debts; and the Commissioner, with a cruelty quite shameful towards a fallen man, had qualified his ways of getting money in most severe language, and had sent him back to prison again for the space of nine calendar months, an indefinite period, and until his accounts could be made up. This delay Walker bore like a philosopher, and, far from repining, was still the gayest fellow of the tennis-court, and the soul of the midnight carouse.

There is no use in raking up old stories, and hunting through files of dead newspapers, to know what were the specific acts which made the Commissioner so angry with Captain Walker. Many a rogue has come before the Court and passed through it since then, and I would lay a wager that Howard Walker was not a bit worse than his neighbours. But as he was not a lord, and as he had no friends on coming out of prison, and had settled no money on his wife, and had, as it must be confessed, an exceedingly bad character, it is not likely that the latter would be forgiven him when once more free in the world. For instance, when Double-quits left the Fleet, he was received with open arms by his family, and had two-and-thirty horses in his stables before a week was over. Pam, of the Dragoons, came out, and instantly got a place as Government courier—a place found so good of late years (and no wonder; it is better pay than that of a colonel), that our noblemen and gentry eagerly press for it. Frank Hurricane was sent out as Registrar of Tobago, or Sago, or Ticonderago. In fact, for a younger son of good family it is rather advantageous to get into debt twenty or thirty thousand pounds; you are sure of a good place afterwards in the colonies. Your friends are so anxious to get rid

of you, that they will move heaven and earth to serve you. And so all the above companions of misfortune with Walker were speedily made comfortable. But *he* had no rich parents; his old father was dead in York jail. How was he to start in the world again? What friendly hand was there to fill his pocket with gold, and his cup with sparkling champagne? He was, in fact, an object of the greatest pity; for I know of no greater than a gentleman of his habits without the means of gratifying them. He must live well, and he has not the means. Is there a more pathetic case? As for a mere low beggar—some labourless labourer, or some weaver out of place—don't let us throw away our compassion upon *them*. Psha! they're accustomed to starve. They *can* sleep upon boards, or dine off a crust; whereas a gentleman would die in the same situation. I think this was poor Morgiana's way of reasoning. For Walker's cash in prison beginning presently to run low, and knowing quite well that the dear fellow could not exist there without the luxuries to which he had been accustomed, she borrowed money from her mother, until the poor old lady was *à sec*. She even confessed, with tears, to Woolsey, that she was in particular want of twenty pounds, to pay a poor milliner, whose debt she could not bear to put in her husband's schedule. And I need not say she carried the money to her husband, who might have been greatly benefited by it—only he had a run of bad luck at the cards; and how the deuce can a man help *that?*

Woolsey had repurchased for her one of the Cashmere shawls. She left it behind her one day at the Fleet prison, and some rascal stole it there; having the grace, however, to send Woolsey the ticket, signifying the place where it had been pawned. Who could the scoundrel have been? Woolsey swore a great oath, and fancied he knew; but if it was Walker himself (as Woolsey fancied, and probably as was the case) who made away with the shawl, being pressed thereto by necessity, was it fair to call him a scoundrel for so doing, and should we not rather laud the delicacy of his proceeding? He was poor: who can command the cards? But he did not wish his wife should know *how* poor; he could not bear that she should suppose him arrived at the necessity of pawning a shawl.

She who had such beautiful ringlets, of a sudden pleaded cold in the head, and took to wearing caps. One summer evening, as she and the baby and Mrs. Crump and Woolsey (let us say all four babies together) were laughing and playing in Mrs. Crump's drawing-room—playing the most absurd gambols, fat Mrs. Crump, for instance, hiding behind the sofa, Woolsey chuck-chucking, cock-a-doodle-dooing, and performing those indescribable freaks which gentlemen with philoprogenitive organs will execute in the company of children,—in the midst of their play the baby gave a tug at his mother's cap. Off it came—her hair was cut close to her head!

Morgiana turned as red as sealing-wax, and trembled very much; Mrs. Crump screamed, "My child, where is your hair?" and Woolsey, bursting out with a most tremendous oath against Walker that would send Miss Prim into convulsions, put his handkerchief to his face and actually wept. "The infernal bubble-ubble-ackguard!" said he, roaring and clenching his fists.

As he had passed the Bower of Bloom a few days before, he saw Mossrose, who was combing out a jet-black ringlet, and held it up, as if for Woolsey's examination, with a peculiar grin. The tailor did not understand the joke, but he saw now what had happened. Morgiana had sold her hair for five guineas: she would have sold her arm had her husband bidden her. On looking in her drawers, it was found she had sold almost all her wearing apparel. The child's clothes were all there, however. It was because her husband talked of disposing of a gilt coral that the child had that she had parted with the locks which had formed her pride.

"I'll give you twenty guineas for that hair, you infamous fat coward," roared the little tailor to Eglantine that evening. "Give it up, or I'll kill you——"

"Mr. Mossrose! Mr. Mossrose!" shouted the perfumer.

"Vell, vatsh the matter, vatsh the row? fight avay, my boys; two to one on the tailor," said Mr. Mossrose, much enjoying the sport (for Woolsey, striding through the shop without speaking to him, had rushed into the studio, where he plumped upon Eglantine).

"Tell him about that 'air, sir."

"That hair! Now keep yourself quiet, Mister Timble, and don't tink for to bully *me*. You mean Mrs. Valker's hair? Vy, she sold it me."

"And the more blackguard you for buying it! Will you take twenty guineas for it?"

"No," said Mossrose.

"Twenty-five?"

"Can't," said Mossrose.

"Hang it; will you take forty? There!"

"I vish I'd kep' it," said the Hebrew gentleman, with unfeigned regret. "Eglantine dressed it this very night."

"For Countess Baldenstiern, the Swedish Hambassador's lady," says Eglantine (his Hebrew partner was by no means a favourite with the ladies, and only superintended the accounts of the concern). "It's this very night at Devonshire 'Ouse, with four hostrich plumes, lappets, and trimmings. And now, Mr. Woolsey, I'll trouble you to apologize."

Mr. Woolsey did not answer, but walked up to Mr. Eglantine and snapped his fingers so close under the perfumer's nose that the latter started back and seized the bell-rope. Mossrose burst out laughing, and the tailor walked majestically from the shop with both hands stuck between the lappets of his coat.

"My dear," said he to Morgiana a short time afterwards, "you must not encourage that husband of yours in his extravagance, and sell the clothes off your poor back, that he may feast and act the fine gentleman in prison."

"It is his health, poor dear soul!" interposed Mrs. Walker; "his chest. Every farthing of the money goes to the doctors, poor fellow!"

"Well, now listen: I am a rich man" (it was a great fib, for Woolsey's income as a junior partner of the firm was but a small one); "I can very well afford to make him an allowance while he is in the Fleet, and have written to him to say so. But if you ever give him a penny, or sell a trinket belonging to you, upon my word and honour I will withdraw the allowance, and though it would go to my heart, I'll never see you again. You wouldn't make me unhappy, would you?"

"I'd go on my knees to serve you, and Heaven bless you!" said the wife.

"Well, then, you must give me this promise." And she did. "And now," said he, "your mother and Podmore and I have been talking over matters, and we've agreed that you may make a very good income for yourself; though, to be sure, I wish it could have been managed any other way; but needs must, you know. You're the finest singer in the universe."

"La!" said Morgiana, highly delighted.

"*I* never heard anything like you, though I'm no judge. Podmore says he is sure you will do very well, and has no doubt you might get very good engagements at concerts or on the stage; and as that husband will never do any good, and you have a child to support, sing you must."

"Oh! how glad I should be to pay his debts and repay all he has done for me," cried Mrs. Walker. "Think of his giving two hundred guineas to Mr. Baroski to have me taught. Was not that kind of him? Do you *really* think I should succeed?"

"There's Miss Larkins has succeeded."

"The little, high-shouldered, vulgar thing!" says Morgiana. "I'm sure I ought to succeed if *she* did."

"She sing against Morgiana?" said Mrs. Crump. "I'd like to see her, indeed! She ain't fit to snuff a candle to her."

"I dare say not," said the tailor, "though I don't understand the thing myself; but if Morgiana can make a fortune, why shouldn't she?"

"Heaven knows we want it, Woolsey," cried Mrs. Crump. "And to see her on the stage was always the wish of my heart." And so it had formerly been the wish of Morgiana; and now, with the hope of helping her husband and child, the wish became a duty, and she fell to practising once more from morning till night.

One of the most generous of men and tailors who ever lived now promised, if further instruction should be considered necessary (though that he could hardly believe possible), that he would lend Morgiana any sum required for the payment of lessons; and accordingly she once more be-

took herself, under Podmore's advice, to the singing-school. Baroski's academy was, after the passages between them, out of the question; and she placed herself under the instruction of the excellent English composer, Sir George Thrum, whose large and awful wife, Lady Thrum, dragon of virtue and propriety, kept watch over the master and the pupils, and was the sternest guardian of female virtue on or off any stage.

Morgiana came at a propitious moment. Baroski had launched Miss Larkins, under the name of Ligonier. The Ligonier was enjoying considerable success, and was singing classical music to tolerable audiences; whereas Miss Butts, Sir George's last pupil, had turned out a complete failure, and the rival house was only able to make a faint opposition to the new star with Miss M'Whirter, who, though an old favourite, had lost her upper notes and her front teeth, and, the fact was, drew no longer.

Directly Sir George heard Mrs. Walker he tapped Podmore, who accompanied her, on the waistcoat, and said, "Poddy, thank you; we'll cut the orange-boy's throat with that voice." It was by the familiar title of orange-boy that the great Baroski was known among his opponents.

"We'll crush him, Podmore," said Lady Thrum, in her deep hollow voice. "You may stop and dine." And Podmore stayed to dinner, and ate cold mutton and drank Marsala with the greatest reverence for the great English composer. The very next day Lady Thrum hired a pair of horses, and paid a visit to Mrs. Crump and her daughter at "Sadler's Wells."

All these things were kept profoundly secret from Walker, who received very magnanimously the allowance of two guineas a week which Woolsey made him, and, with the aid of the few shillings his wife could bring him, managed to exist as best he might. He did not dislike gin when he could get no claret; and the former liquor, under the name of "tape," used to be measured out pretty liberally in what was formerly his Majesty's prison of the Fleet.

Morgiana pursued her studies under Thrum, and we shall hear in the next chapter how it was she changed her name to RAVENSWING.

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH MORGIANA ADVANCES TOWARDS FAME AND HONOUR, AND IN WHICH SEVERAL GREAT LITERARY CHARACTERS MAKE THEIR APPEARANCE.

"We must begin, my dear madam," said Sir George Thrum, "by unlearning all that Mr. Baroski (of whom I do not wish to speak with the slightest disrespect) has taught you!"

Morgiana knew that every professor says as much, and submitted to undergo the study requisite for Sir George's system with perfect good grace. *Au fond*, as I was given to understand, the methods of the two artists were pretty similar; but as there was rivalry between them, and continual desertion of scholars from one school to another, it was fair for each to take all the credit he could get in the success of any pupil. If a pupil failed, for instance, Thrum would say Baroski had spoiled her irretrievably; while the German would regret "dat dat yong voman, who had a good organ, should have trown away her dime wid dat old Drum." When one of these deserters succeeded, "Yes, yes," would either professor cry, "I formed her; she owes her fortune to me." Both of them thus, in future days, claimed the education of the famous Ravenswing; and even Sir George Thrum, though he wished to *écraser* the Ligonier, pretended that her present success was his work, because once she had been brought by her mother, Mrs. Larkins, to sing for Sir George's approval.

When the two professors met, it was with the most delighted cordiality on the part of both. "*Mein lieber Herr*," Thrum would say (with some malice), "your sonata in x flat is divine." "Chevalier," Baroski would reply, "dat andante movement in w is worthy of Beethoven. I gif you my sacred honour," and so forth. In fact, they loved each other as gentlemen in their profession always do.

The two famous professors conduct their academies on very opposite principles. Baroski writes ballet music; Thrum, on the contrary, says "he cannot but deplore the dangerous fascinations of the dance," and writes more for Exeter Hall and Birmingham. While Baroski drives a cab

in the Park with a very suspicious Mademoiselle Léocadie, or Aménaide, by his side, you may see Thrum walking to evening church with his lady, and hymns are sung there of his own composition. He belongs to the "Athenæum Club," he goes to the levee once a year, he does everything that a respectable man should; and if, by the means of this respectability, he manages to make his little trade far more profitable than it otherwise would be, are we to quarrel with him for it?

Sir George, in fact, had every reason to be respectable. He had been a choir-boy at Windsor, had played to the old King's violoncello, had been intimate with him, and had received knighthood at the hand of his revered sovereign. He had a snuff-box which his Majesty gave him, and portraits of him and the young princes all over the house. He had also a foreign order (no other, indeed, than the Elephant and Castle of Kalbsbraten-Pumpernickel), conferred upon him by the Grand Duke when here with the allied sovereigns in 1814. With this riband round his neck, on gala days, and in a white waistcoat, the old gentleman looked splendid as he moved along in a blue coat with the Windsor button, and neat black small-clothes, and silk stockings. He lived in an old, tall, dingy house, furnished in the reign of George III., his beloved master, and not much more cheerful now than a family vault. They are awfully funereal those ornaments of the close of the last century—tall, gloomy, horse-hair chairs, mouldy Turkey carpets, with wretched druggets to guard them, little cracked sticking-plaster miniatures of people in *tours* and pig-tails over high-shouldered mantelpieces, two dismal urns on each side of a lanky sideboard, and in the midst a queer twisted receptacle for worn-out knives with green handles. Under the sideboard stands a cellaret that looks as if it held half a bottle of currant wine, and a shivering plate-warmer that never could get any comfort out of the wretched old cramped grate yonder. Don't you know in such houses the grey gloom that hangs over the stairs, the dull-coloured old carpet that winds its way up the same, growing thinner, duller, and more threadbare, as it mounts to the bedroom floors? There is something awful in the bedroom of a respectable old couple of sixty-five. Think of

the old feathers, turbans, bugles, petticoats, pomatum-pots, spencers, white satin shoes, false fronts, the old flaccid, boneless stays tied up in faded riband, the dusky fans, the old forty-years-old baby-linen, the letters of Sir George when he was young, the doll of poor Maria, who died in 1803, Frederick's first corduroy breeches, and the newspaper which contains the account of his distinguishing himself at the siege of Seringapatam. All these lie somewhere, damp and squeezed down into glum old presses and wardrobes. At that glass the wife has sat many times these fifty years; in that old morocco bed her children were born. Where are they now? Fred, the brave captain, and Charles, the saucy colleger; there hangs a drawing of him done by Mr. Beechey, and that sketch by Cosway was the very likeness of Louisa before.....

"Mr. Fitz-Boodle! for Heaven's sake come down. What are you doing in a lady's bedroom?"

"The fact is, madam, I had no business there in life; but, having had quite enough wine with Sir George, my thoughts had wandered upstairs into the sanctuary of female excellence, where your ladyship nightly reposes. You do not sleep so well now as in old days, though there is no patter of little steps to wake you overhead."

They call that room the nursery still, and the little wicket still hangs at the upper stairs: it has been there for forty years—*bon Dieu!* Can't you see the ghosts of little faces peering over it? I wonder whether they get up in the night as the moonlight shines into the blank, vacant old room, and play there solemnly with little ghostly horses and the spirits of dolls, and tops that turn and turn but don't hum.

Once more, sir, come down to the lower story—that is, to the Morgiana story—with which the above sentences have no more to do than this morning's leading article in *The Times;* only it was at this house of Sir George Thrum's that I met Morgiana. Sir George, in old days, had instructed some of the female members of our family, and I recollect cutting my fingers as a child with one of those attenuated green-handled knives in the queer box yonder.

In those days Sir George Thrum was the first great musical teacher of London, and the royal patronage brought him

a great number of fashionable pupils, of whom Lady Fitz-Boodle was one. It was a long, long time ago: in fact, Sir George Thrum was old enough to remember persons who had been present at Mr. Braham's first appearance, and the old gentleman's days of triumph had been those of Billington and Incledon, Catalani and Madame Storace.

He was the author of several operas ("The Camel Driver," "Britons Alarmed, or the Siege of Bergen-op-Zoom," etc., etc.), and, of course, of songs which had considerable success in their day, but are forgotten now, and are as much faded and out of fashion as those old carpets which we have described in the professor's house, and which were, doubtless, very brilliant once. But such is the fate of carpets, of flowers, of music, of men, and of the most admirable novels—even this story will not be alive for many centuries. Well, well, why struggle against Fate?

But, though his heyday of fashion was gone, Sir George still held his place among the musicians of the old school, conducted occasionally at the Ancient Concerts and the "Philharmonic," and his glees are still favourites after public dinners, and are sung by those old bacchanalians, in chestnut wigs, who attend for the purpose of amusing the guests on such occasions of festivity. The great old people at the gloomy old concerts before mentioned always pay Sir George marked respect; and, indeed, from the old gentleman's peculiar behaviour to his superiors, it is impossible they should not be delighted with him, so he leads at almost every one of the concerts in the old-fashioned houses in town.

Becoming obsequious to his superiors, he is with the rest of the world properly majestic, and has obtained no small success by his admirable and undeviating respectabilty. Respectability has been his great card through life; ladies can trust their daughters at Sir George Thrum's academy. "A good musician, madam," says he to the mother of a new pupil, "should not only have a fine ear, a good voice, and an indomitable industry, but, above all, a faultless character—faultless, that is, as far as our poor nature will permit. And you will remark that those young persons with whom your lovely daughter, Miss Smith, will pursue her musical studies, are all, in a moral point of view,

as spotless as that charming young lady. How should it be otherwise? I have been myself the father of a family; I have been honoured with the intimacy of the wisest and best of kings, my late sovereign George III., and I can proudly show an example of decorum to my pupils in my Sophia. Mrs. Smith, I have the honour of introducing to you my Lady Thrum."

The old lady would rise at this, and make a gigantic curtsy, such a one as had begun the minuet at Ranelagh fifty years ago, and, the introduction ended, Mrs. Smith would retire, after having seen the portraits of the princes, his late Majesty's snuff-box, and a piece of music which he used to play, noted by himself—Mrs. Smith, I say, would drive back to Baker Street, delighted to think that her Frederica had secured so eligible and respectable a master. I forgot to say that, during the interview between Mrs. Smith and Sir George, the latter would be called out of his study by his black servant, and my Lady Thrum would take that opportunity of mentioning when he was knighted, and how he got his foreign order, and deploring the sad condition of *other* musical professors, and the dreadful immorality which sometimes arose in consequence of their laxness. Sir George was a good deal engaged to dinners in the season, and if invited to dine with a nobleman, as he might possibly be on the day when Mrs. Smith requested the honour of his company, he would write back "that he should have had the sincerest happiness in waiting upon Mrs. Smith in Baker Street, if, previously, my Lord Tweedledale had not been so kind as to engage him." This letter, of course, shown by Mrs. Smith to her friends, was received by them with proper respect; and thus, in spite of age and new fashions, Sir George still reigned pre-eminent for a mile round Cavendish Square. By the young pupils of the academy he was called Sir Charles Grandison; and, indeed, fully deserved this title on account of the indomitable respectability of his whole actions.

It was under this gentleman that Morgiana made her *début* in public life. I do not know what arrangements may have been made between Sir George Thrum and his pupil regarding the profits which were to accrue to the former from

engagements procured by him for the latter; but there was, no doubt, an understanding between them. For Sir George, respectable as he was, had the reputation of being extremely clever at a bargain; and Lady Thrum herself, in her great high-tragedy way, could purchase a pair of soles or select a leg of mutton with the best housekeeper in London.

When, however, Morgiana had been for some six months under his tuition, he began, for some reason or other, to be exceedingly hospitable, and invited his friends to numerous entertainments; at one of which, as I have said, I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Walker.

Although the worthy musician's dinners were not good, the old knight had some excellent wine in his cellar, and his arrangement of his party deserves to be commended.

For instance, he meets me and Bob Fitz-Urse in Pall Mall, at whose paternal house he was also a visitor. "My dear young gentlemen," says he, "will you come and dine with a poor musical composer? I have some comet-hock, and, what is more curious to you perhaps, as men of wit, one or two of the great literary characters of London whom you would like to see—quite curiosities, my dear young friends." And we agreed to go.

To the literary men he says, "I have a little quiet party at home—Lord Roundtowers, the Honourable Mr. Fitz-Urse of the Life Guards, and a few more. Can you tear yourself away from the war of wits, and take a quiet dinner with a few mere men about town?"

The literary men instantly purchase new satin stocks and white gloves, and are delighted to fancy themselves members of the world of fashion. Instead of inviting twelve Royal Academicians, or a dozen authors, or a dozen men of science to dinner, as his Grace the Duke of —— and the Right Honourable Sir Robert —— are in the habit of doing once a year, this plan of fusion is the one they should adopt. Not invite all artists, as they would invite all farmers to a rent-dinner; but they should have a proper commingling of artists and men of the world. There is one of the latter whose name is George Savage Fitz-Boodle, who—— But let us return to Sir George Thrum.

Fitz-Urse and I arrive at the dismal old house, and are

conducted up the staircase by a black servant, who shouts out, "Missa Fiss-Boodle—the *Honourable* Missa Fiss-Urse!" It was evident that Lady Thrum had instructed the swarthy groom of the chambers (for there is nothing particularly honourable in my friend Fitz's face that I know of, unless an abominable squint may be said to be so). Lady Thrum, whose figure is something like that of the shot-tower opposite Waterloo Bridge, makes a majestic inclination and a speech to signify her pleasure at receiving under her roof two of the children of Sir George's best pupils. A lady in black velvet is seated by the old fireplace, with whom a stout gentleman in an exceedingly light coat and ornamental waistcoat is talking very busily. "The great star of the night," whispers our host. "Mrs. Walker, gentlemen—the *Ravenswing!* She is talking to the famous Mr. Slang, of the —— Theatre."

"Is she a fine singer?" says Fitz-Urse. "She's a very fine woman."

"My dear young friends, you shall hear to-night! I, who have heard every fine voice in Europe, confidently pledge my respectability that the Ravenswing is equal to them all. She has the graces, sir, of a Venus with the mind of a Muse. She is a siren, sir, without the dangerous qualities of one. She is hallowed, sir, by her misfortunes as by her genius; and I am proud to think that my instructions have been the means of developing the wondrous qualities that were latent within her until now."

"You don't say so!" says gobemouche Fitz-Urse.

Having thus indoctrinated Mr. Fitz-Urse, Sir George takes another of his guests, and proceeds to work upon him. "My dear Mr. Bludyer, how do you do? Mr. Fitz-Boodle, Mr. Bludyer, the brilliant and accomplished wit, whose sallies in the *Tomahawk* delight us every Saturday. Nay, no blushes, my dear sir; you are very wicked, but oh! *so* pleasant. Well, Mr. Bludyer, I am glad to see you, sir, and hope you will have a favourable opinion of our genius, sir. As I was saying to Mr. Fitz-Boodle, she has the graces of a Venus with the mind of a Muse. She is a siren, without the dangerous qualities of one," etc. This little speech was made to half a dozen persons in the course of the evening—persons, for the most part, connected with the public journals

or the theatrical world. There was Mr. Squinny, the editor of the *Flowers of Fashion;* Mr. Desmond Mulligan, the poet and reporter for a morning paper; and other worthies of their calling. For though Sir George is a respectable man, and as high-minded and moral an old gentleman as ever wore knee-buckles, he does not neglect the little arts of popularity, and can condescend to receive very queer company if need be.

For instance, at the dinner-party at which I had the honour of assisting, and at which, on the right hand of Lady Thrum, sat the *obligé* nobleman, whom the Thrums were a great deal too wise to omit (the sight of a lord does good to us commoners, or why else should we be so anxious to have one?), in the second place of honour, and on her ladyship's left hand, sat Mr. Slang, the manager of one of the theatres—a gentleman whom my Lady Thrum would scarcely, but for a great necessity's sake, have been induced to invite to her table. He had the honour of leading Mrs. Walker to dinner, who looked splendid in black velvet and turban, full of health and smiles.

Lord Roundtowers is an old gentleman who has been at the theatres five times a week for these fifty years, a living dictionary of the stage, recollecting every actor and actress who has appeared upon it for half a century. He perfectly well remembered Miss Delancy in Morgiana; he knew what had become of Ali Baba; and how Cassim had left the stage, and was now the keeper of a public-house. All this store of knowledge he kept quietly to himself, or only delivered in confidence to his next neighbour in the intervals of the banquet, which he enjoys prodigiously. He lives at an hotel: if not invited to dine, eats a mutton-chop very humbly at his club, and finishes his evening after the play at Crockford's, whither he goes, not for the sake of the play, but of the supper there. He is described in the *Court Guide* as of "Simmer's Hotel," and of Roundtowers, County Cork. It is said that the round towers really exist. But he has not been in Ireland since the rebellion; and his property is so hampered with ancestral mortgages, and rent-charges, and annuities, that his income is barely sufficient to provide the modest mutton-chop before alluded to. He has, any time

these fifty years, lived in the wickedest company in London, and is, withal, as harmless, mild, good-natured, innocent an old gentleman as can readily be seen.

"Roundy," shouts the elegant Mr. Slang, across the table, with a voice which makes Lady Thrum shudder, "Tuff, a glass of wine."

My lord replies meekly, "Mr. Slang, I shall have very much pleasure. What shall it be?"

"There is Madeira near you, my lord," says my lady, pointing to a tall thin decanter of the fashion of the year.

"Madeira! Marsala, by Jove, your ladyship means!" shouts Mr. Slang. "No, no; old birds are not caught with chaff.—Thrum, old boy, let's have some of your comet-hock."

"My Lady Thrum, I believe that *is* Marsala," says the knight, blushing a little, in reply to a question from his Sophia.—"Ajax, the hock to Mr. Slang."

"I'm in that!" yells Bludyer from the end of the table. "My lord, I'll join you."

"Mr. ——, I beg your pardon—I shall be very happy to take wine with you, sir."

"It is Mr. Bludyer, the celebrated newspaper writer," whispers Lady Thrum.

"Bludyer, Bludyer? A very clever man, I dare say. He has a very loud voice, and reminds me of Brett. Does your ladyship remember Brett, who played the 'fathers' at the Haymarket in 1802?"

"What an old stupid Roundtowers is!" says Slang archly, nudging Mrs. Walker in the side. "How's Walker, eh?"

"My husband is in the country," replied Mrs. Walker hesitatingly.

"Gammon! *I* know where he is! Law bless you!—don't blush. I've been there myself a dozen times.—We were talking about quod, Lady Thrum. Were you ever in college?"

"I was at the Commemoration at Oxford in 1814, when the sovereigns were there, and at Cambridge when Sir George received his degree of Doctor of Music."

"Laud, Laud, *that's* not the college *we* mean."

"There is also the college in Gower Street, where my grandson——"

"This is the college in *Queer Street*, ma'am, haw, haw! Mulligan, you divvle" (in an Irish accent), "a glass of wine with you. Wine here, you waiter! What's your name, you black nigger? 'Possum up a gum-tree, eh? Fill him up. Dere he go" (imitating the Mandingo manner of speaking English).

In this agreeable way would Mr. Slang rattle on, speedily making himself the centre of the conversation, and addressing graceful familiarities to all the gentlemen and ladies round him.

It was good to see how the little knight, the most moral and calm of men, was compelled to receive Mr. Slang's stories, and the frightened air with which, at the conclusion of one of them, he would venture upon a commendatory grin. His lady, on her part too, had been laboriously civil; and on the occasion on which I had the honour of meeting this gentleman and Mrs. Walker, it was the latter who gave the signal for withdrawing to the lady of the house, by saying, "I think, Lady Thrum, it is quite time for us to retire." Some exquisite joke of Mr. Slang's was the cause of this abrupt disappearance. But as they went upstairs to the drawing-room, Lady Thrum took occasion to say, "My dear, in the course of your profession you will have to submit to many such familiarities on the part of persons of low breeding, such as I fear Mr. Slang is. But let me caution you against giving way to your temper as you did. Did you not perceive that *I* never allowed him to see my inward dissatisfaction? And I make it a particular point that you should be very civil to him to-night. Your interests—our interests—depend upon it."

"And are my interests to make me civil to a wretch like that?"

"Mrs. Walker, would you wish to give lessons in morality and behaviour to Lady Thrum?" said the old lady, drawing herself up with great dignity. It was evident that she had a very strong desire indeed to conciliate Mr. Slang, and hence I have no doubt that Sir George was to have a considerable share of Morgiana's earnings.

Mr. Bludyer, the famous editor of the *Tomahawk*, whose jokes Sir George pretended to admire so much (Sir George, who never made a joke in his life), was a press bravo of con-

between the singing, a youth to play on the piano, Miss Horsman to sing with Mrs. Walker, and other scientific characters. In a corner sat a red-faced old lady, of whom the mistress of the mansion took little notice; and a gentleman with a royal button, who blushed and looked exceedingly modest.

"Hang me!" says Mr. Bludyer, who had perfectly good reasons for recognizing Mr. Woolsey, and who on this day chose to assume his aristocratic air, "there's a tailor in the room! What do they mean by asking *me* to meet tradesmen?"

"Delancy, my dear," cries Slang, entering the room with a reel, "how's your precious health? Give us your hand! When *are* we to be married? Make room for me on the sofa, that's a duck!"

"Get along, Slang," says Mrs. Crump, addressed by the manager by her maiden name (artists generally drop the title of honour which people adopt in the world, and call each other by their simple surnames)—"get along, Slang, or I'll tell Mrs. S.!" The enterprising manager replies by sportively striking Mrs. Crump on the side a blow which causes a great giggle from the lady insulted, and a most good-humoured threat to box Slang's ears. I fear very much that Morgiana's mother thought Mr. Slang an exceedingly gentlemanlike and agreeable person; besides, she was eager to have his good opinion of Mrs. Walker's singing.

The manager stretched himself out with much gracefulness on the sofa, supporting two little dumpy legs encased in varnished boots on a chair.

"Ajax, some tea to Mr. Slang," said my lady, looking towards that gentleman with a countenance expressive of some alarm, I thought.

"That's right, Ajax, my black prince!" exclaimed Slang, when the negro brought the required refreshment; "and now I suppose you'll be wanted in the orchestra yonder. Don't Ajax play the cymbals, Sir George?"

"Ha, ha, ha! very good—capital!" answered the knight, exceedingly frightened; "but ours is not a *military* band. Miss Horsman, Mr. Craw, my dear Mrs. Ravenswing, shall we begin the trio? Silence, gentlemen, if you please: it is a little piece from my opera of the 'Brigand's Bride.' Miss

Horsman takes the Page's part, Mr. Craw is Stiletto the Brigand, my accomplished pupil is the Bride;" and the music began.

"*The Bride.*

"My heart with joy is beating,
My eyes with tears are dim;

"*The Page.*

"Her heart with joy is beating,
Her eyes are fixed on him;

"*The Brigand.*

"My heart with rage is beating,
In blood my eyeballs swim!"

What may have been the merits of the music or the singing, I, of course, cannot guess. Lady Thrum sat opposite the tea-cups, nodding her head and beating time very gravely. Lord Roundtowers, by her side, nodded his head too, for a while, and then fell asleep. I should have done the same but for the manager, whose actions were worthy of remark. He sang with all the three singers, and a great deal louder than any of them; he shouted bravo! or hissed as he thought proper; he criticized all the points of Mrs. Walker's person. "She'll do, Crump, she'll do—a splendid arm—you'll see her eyes in the shilling gallery! What sort of a foot has she? She's five feet three if she's an inch! Bravo—slap up—capital—hurra!" and he concluded by saying, with the aid of the Ravenswing, he would put Ligonier's nose out of joint!

The enthusiasm of Mr. Slang almost reconciled Lady Thrum to the abruptness of his manners, and even caused Sir George to forget that his chorus had been interrupted by the obstreperous familiarity of the manager.

"And what do *you* think, Mr. Bludyer?" said the tailor, delighted that his *protégée* should be thus winning all hearts. "Isn't Mrs. Walker a tiptop singer, eh, sir?"

"I think she's a very bad one, Mr. Woolsey," said the illustrious author, wishing to abbreviate all communications with a tailor to whom he owed forty pounds.

"Then, sir," says Mr. Woolsey fiercely, "I'll—I'll thank you to pay me my little bill!"

It is true there was no connection between Mrs. Walker's

name of the party to be puffed perpetually before the public. Artists cannot be advertised like Macassar oil or blacking, and they want it to the full as much; hence endless ingenuity must be practised in order to keep the popular attention awake. Suppose a great actor moves from London to Windsor, the *Brentford Champion* must state that "Yesterday Mr. Blazes and suite passed rapidly through our city; the celebrated comedian is engaged, we hear, at Windsor, to give some of his inimitable readings of our great national bard to the *most illustrious audience* in the realm." This piece of intelligence the *Hammersmith Observer* will question the next week, as thus:—"A contemporary, the *Brentford Champion*, says that Blazes is engaged to give Shakespearian readings at Windsor to 'the most illustrious audience in the realm.' We question this fact very much. We would, indeed, that it were true; but *the most illustrious audience* in the realm prefer *foreign* melodies to *the native wood-notes wild* of the sweet song-bird of Avon. Mr. Blazes is simply gone to Eton, where his son, Master Massinger Blazes, is suffering, we regret to hear, under a severe attack of the chicken-pox. This complaint (incident to youth) has raged, we understand, with frightful virulence in Eton School."

And if, after the above paragraphs, some London paper chooses to attack the folly of the provincial press, which talks of Mr. Blazes, and chronicles his movements, as if he were a crowned head, what harm is done? Blazes can write in his own name to the London journal, and say that it is not *his* fault if provincial journals choose to chronicle his movements, and that he was far from wishing that the afflictions of those who are dear to him should form the subject of public comment, and be held up to public ridicule. "We had no intention of hurting the feelings of an estimable public servant," writes the editor; "and our remarks on the chicken-pox were general, not personal. We sincerely trust that Master Massinger Blazes has recovered from that complaint, and that he may pass through the measles, the whooping-cough, the fourth form, and all other diseases to which youth is subject, with comfort to himself, and credit to his parents and teachers." At his next appearance on the stage after this controversy, a British public calls for Blazes three times after the play, and

somehow there is sure to be some one with a laurel wreath in a stage box, who flings that chaplet at the inspired artist's feet.

I don't know how it was, but before the *début* of Morgiana the English press began to heave and throb in a convulsive manner, as if indicative of the near birth of some great thing. For instance, you read in one paper:—

"*Anecdote of Karl Maria von Weber.*—When the author of *Oberon* was in England, he was invited by a noble duke to dinner, and some of the most celebrated of our artists were assembled to meet him. The signal being given to descend to the *salle-à-manger*, the German composer was invited by his noble host (a bachelor) to lead the way. 'Is it not the fashion in your country,' said he simply, 'for the man of the first eminence to take the first place? Here is one whose genius entitles him to be first *anywhere*.' And so saying, he pointed to our admirable English composer, Sir George Thrum. The two musicians were friends to the last, and Sir George has still the identical piece of rosin which the author of the *Freischutz* gave him."—*The Moon* (morning paper), 2nd June.

"*George III. a composer.*—Sir George Thrum has in his possession the score of an air, the words from *Samson Agonistes*, an autograph of the late revered monarch. We hear that that excellent composer has in store for us not only an opera, but a pupil, with whose transcendent merits the *élite* of our aristocracy are already familiar."—*Ibid.*, June 5.

"*Music with a Vengeance.*—The march, to the sound of which the 49th and 75th regiments rushed up the breach of Badajoz, was the celebrated air from *Britons Alarmed, or the Siege of Bergen-op-Zoom*, by our famous English composer, Sir George Thrum. Marshal Davoust said that the French line never stood when that air was performed to the charge of the bayonet. We hear the veteran musician has an opera now about to appear, and have no doubt that *Old England* will now, as then, show its superiority over *all* foreign opponents."—*Albion*.

"We have been accused of preferring the *produit* of the *étranger* to the talent of our own native shores; but those who speak so, little know us. We are *fanatici per la musica* wherever it be, and welcome merit *dans chaque pays du monde*. What do we say? *Le mérite n'a point de pays*, as Napoleon said; and Sir George Thrum (Chevalier de l'ordre de l'Éléphant et Château de Panama) is a maestro whose fame *appartient à l'Europe*.

"We have just heard the lovely *élève*, whose rare qualities the cavaliere has brought to perfection—we have heard THE RAVENSWING (*pourquoi cacher un nom que demain un monde va saluer*), and a creature more beautiful and gifted never bloomed before *dans nos climats*. She sang the delicious duet of the 'Nabucodonosore,' with Count Pizzicato, with a *bellezza*, a *grandezza*, a *raggio*, that excited in the bosom of

the audience a corresponding *furore*. Her *scherzando* was exquisite, though we confess we thought the concluding *fioritura* in the passage in y flat a leetle, a very leetle *sforzata*. Surely the words

'Giorno d'orrore,
Delire, dolore,
Nabucodonosore,'

should be given *andante*, and not *con strepito*. But this is a *faute bien légère* in the midst of such unrivalled excellence, and only mentioned here that we may have *something* to criticize.

"We hear that the enterprising *impresario* of one of the royal theatres has made an engagement with the Diva; and, if we have a regret, it is that she should be compelled to sing in the unfortunate language of our rude northern clime, which does not *prêter* itself near so well to the *bocca* of the *cantatrice* as do the mellifluous accents of the Lingua Toscana, the *langue par excellence* of song.

"The Ravenswing's voice is a magnificent contra-basso of nine octaves," etc.—*Flowers of Fashion*, June 10.

"Old Thrum, the composer, is bringing out an opera and a pupil. The opera is good, the pupil first-rate. The opera will do much more than compete with the infernal twaddle and disgusting slip-slop of Donizetti, and the milk-and-water fools who imitate him; it will (and we ask the readers of the *Tomahawk* were we EVER mistaken?) surpass all these. It is *good*, of downright English stuff. The airs are fresh and pleasing, the choruses large and noble, the instrumentation solid and rich, the music is carefully written. We wish old Thrum and his opera well.

"His pupil is a SURE CARD, a splendid woman, and a splendid singer. She is so handsome that she might sing as much out of tune as Miss Ligonier, and the public would forgive her; and sings so well, that were she as ugly as the aforesaid Ligonier, the audience would listen to her. The Ravenswing—that is her fantastical theatrical name (her real name is the same with that of a notorious scoundrel in the Fleet, who invented the Panama swindle, the Pontine Marshes swindle, the soap swindle—*how are you off for soap now*, Mr. W–lk–r?)—the Ravenswing, we say, will do. Slang has engaged her at thirty guineas per week, and she appears next month in Thrum's opera, of which the words are written by a great ass with some talent—we mean Mr. Mulligan.

"There is a foreign fool in the *Flowers of Fashion* who is doing his best to disgust the public by his filthy flattery. It is enough to make one sick. Why is the foreign beast not kicked out of the paper?"—*The Tomahawk*, June 17.

The three first "anecdotes" were supplied by Mulligan to his paper, with many others which need not here be repeated: he kept them up with amazing energy and variety. Anecdotes of Sir George Thrum met you unexpectedly in queer corners of country papers; puffs of the English school

of music appeared perpetually in "notices to correspondents" in the Sunday prints, some of which Mr. Slang commanded, and in others over which the indefatigable Mulligan had a control. This youth was the soul of the little conspiracy for raising Morgiana into fame; and humble as he is, and great and respectable as is Sir George Thrum, it is my belief that the Ravenswing would never have been the Ravenswing she is but for the ingenuity and energy of the honest Hibernian reporter.

It is only the business of the great man who writes the leading articles which appear in the large type of the daily papers to compose those astonishing pieces of eloquence; the other parts of the paper are left to the ingenuity of the sub-editor, whose duty it is to select paragraphs, reject or receive horrid accidents, police reports, etc., with which, occupied as he is in the exercise of his tremendous functions, the editor himself cannot be expected to meddle. The fate of Europe is his province; the rise and fall of empires, and the great questions of State demand the editor's attention: the humble puff, the paragraph about the last murder, or the state of the crops, or the sewers in Chancery Lane, is confided to the care of the sub; and it is curious to see what a prodigious number of Irishmen exist among the sub-editors of London. When the Liberator enumerates the services of his countrymen—how the battle of Fontenoy was won by the Irish Brigade, how the battle of Waterloo would have been lost but for the Irish regiments—and enumerates other acts for which we are indebted to Milesian heroism and genius, he ought at least to mention the Irish brigade of the press, and the amazing services they do to this country.

The truth is, the Irish reporters and soldiers appear to do their duty right well; and my friend Mr. Mulligan is one of the former. Having the interests of his opera and the Ravenswing strongly at heart, and being amongst his brethren an exceedingly popular fellow, he managed matters so that never a day passed but some paragraph appeared somewhere regarding the new singer, in whom, for their countryman's sake, all his brothers and sub-editors felt an interest.

These puffs, destined to make known to all the world the merits of the Ravenswing, of course, had an effect upon a

gentleman very closely connected with that lady, the respectable prisoner in the Fleet, Captain Walker. As long as he received his weekly two guineas from Mr. Woolsey, and the occasional half-crowns which his wife could spare in her almost daily visits to him, he had never troubled himself to inquire what her pursuits were, and had allowed her (though the worthy woman longed with all her might to betray herself) to keep her secret. He was far from thinking, indeed, that his wife would prove such a treasure to him.

But when the voice of fame and the columns of the public journals brought him each day some new story regarding the merits, genius, and beauty of the Ravenswing; when rumours reached him that she was the favourite pupil of Sir George Thrum; when she brought him five guineas after singing at the "Philharmonic" (other five the good soul had spent in purchasing some smart new cockades, hats, cloaks, and laces for her little son); when, finally, it was said that Slang, the great manager, offered her an engagement at thirty guineas per week, Mr. Walker became exceedingly interested in his wife's proceedings, of which he demanded from her the fullest explanation.

Using his marital authority, he absolutely forbade Mrs. Walker's appearance on the public stage; he wrote to Sir George Thrum a letter expressive of his highest indignation that negotiations so important should ever have been commenced without his authorization; and he wrote to his dear Slang (for these gentlemen were very intimate, and in the course of his transactions as an agent, Mr. W. had had many dealings with Mr. S.), asking his dear Slang whether the latter thought his friend Walker would be so green as to allow his wife to appear on the stage, and he remain in prison with all his debts on his head?

And it was a curious thing now to behold how eager those very creditors who but yesterday (and with perfect correctness) had denounced Mr. Walker as a swindler, who had refused to come to any composition with him, and had sworn never to release him—how they on a sudden became quite eager to come to an arrangement with him, and offered, nay, begged and prayed him to go free—only giving them his own and Mrs. Walker's acknowledgment of their debt, with

a promise that a part of the lady's salary should be devoted to the payment of the claim.

"The lady's salary!" said Mr. Walker indignantly, to these gentlemen and their attorneys. "Do you suppose I will allow Mrs. Walker to go on the stage?—do you suppose I am such a fool as to sign bills to the full amount of these claims against me, when in a few months more I can walk out of prison without paying a shilling? Gentlemen, you take Howard Walker for an idiot. I like the Fleet, and rather than pay, I'll stay here for these ten years."

In other words, it was the Captain's determination to make some advantageous bargain for himself with his creditors and the gentlemen who were interested in bringing forward Mrs. Walker on the stage. And who can say that in so determining he did not act with laudable prudence and justice?

"You do not surely consider, my very dear sir, that half the amount of Mrs. Walker's salaries is too much for my immense trouble and pains in teaching her?" cried Sir George Thrum (who, in reply to Walker's note, thought it most prudent to wait personally on that gentleman). "Remember that I am the first master in England; that I have the best interest in England; that I can bring her out at the Palace, and at every concert and musical festival in England; that I am obliged to teach her every single note that she utters; and that without me she could no more sing a song than her little baby could walk without its nurse."

"I believe about half what you say," said Mr. Walker.

"My dear Captain Walker, would you question my integrity? Who was it that made Mrs. Millington's fortune—the celebrated Mrs. Millington, who has now got a hundred thousand pounds? Who was it that brought out the finest tenor in Europe, Poppleton? Ask the musical world, ask those great artists themselves, and they will tell you they owe their reputation, their fortune, to Sir George Thrum."

"It is very likely," replied the Captain coolly. "You *are* a good master, I dare say, Sir George; but I am not going to article Mrs. Walker to you for three years, and sign her articles in the Fleet. Mrs. Walker shan't sing till I'm a free man, that's flat: if I stay here till you're dead, she shan't."

"Gracious powers, sir!" exclaimed Sir George, "do you expect me to pay your debts?"

"Yes, old boy," answered the Captain, "and to give me something handsome in hand, too; and that's my ultimatum. And so I wish you good-morning, for I am engaged to play a match at tennis below."

This little interview exceedingly frightened the worthy knight, who went home to his lady in a delirious state of alarm, occasioned by the audacity of Captain Walker.

Mr. Slang's interview with him was scarcely more satisfactory. He owed, he said, four thousand pounds. His creditors might be brought to compound for five shillings in the pound. He would not consent to allow his wife to make a single engagement until the creditors were satisfied, and until he had a handsome sum in hand to begin the world with. "Unless my wife comes out, you'll be in the *Gazette* yourself; you know you will. So you may take her or leave her, as you think fit."

"Let her sing one night as a trial," said Mr. Slang.

"If she sings one night, the creditors will want their money in full," replied the Captain. "I shan't let her labour, poor thing, for the profit of those scoundrels!" added the prisoner, with much feeling. And Slang left him with a much greater respect for Walker than he had ever before possessed. He was struck with the gallantry of the man who could triumph over misfortunes—nay, make misfortune itself an engine of good luck.

Mrs. Walker was instructed instantly to have a severe sore throat. The journals in Mr. Slang's interest deplored this illness pathetically, while the papers in the interest of the opposition theatre magnified it with great malice. "The new singer," said one, "the great wonder which Slang promised us, is as hoarse as a *raven!*" "Dr. Thorax pronounces," wrote another paper, "that the quinsy, which has suddenly prostrated Mrs. Ravenswing, whose singing at the 'Philharmonic,' previous to her appearance at the 'T. R——,' excited so much applause, has destroyed the lady's voice for ever. We luckily need no other *prima donna*, when that place, as nightly thousands acknowledge, is held by Miss Ligonier." The *Looker-on* said, "That although some well-informed

contemporaries had declared Mrs. W. Ravenswing's complaint to be a quinsy, others, on whose authority they could equally rely, had pronounced it to be a consumption. At all events, she was in an exceedingly dangerous state; from which, though we do not expect, we heartily trust she may recover. Opinions differ as to the merits of this lady, some saying that she was altogether inferior to Miss Ligonier, while other connoisseurs declare the latter lady to be by no means so accomplished a person. This point, we fear," continued the *Looker-on*, "can never now be settled, unless, which we fear is improbable, Mrs. Ravenswing should ever so far recover as to be able to make her *début;* and even then, the new singer will not have a fair chance, unless her voice and strength shall be fully restored. This information, which we have from exclusive sources, may be relied on," concluded the *Looker-on*, "as authentic."

It was Mr. Walker himself, that artful and audacious Fleet prisoner, who concocted those very paragraphs against his wife's health which appeared in the journals of the Ligonier party. The partisans of that lady were delighted, the creditors of Mr. Walker astounded, at reading them. Even Sir George Thrum was taken in, and came to the Fleet prison in considerable alarm.

"Mum's the word, my good sir!" said Mr. Walker. "Now is the time to make arrangements with the creditors."

Well, these arrangements were finally made. It does not matter how many shillings in the pound satisfied the rapacious creditors of Morgiana's husband. But it is certain that her voice returned to her all of a sudden upon the Captain's release. The papers of the Mulligan faction again trumpeted her perfections; the agreement with Mr. Slang was concluded; that with Sir George Thrum, the great composer, satisfactorily arranged; and the new opera underlined in immense capitals in the bills, and put in rehearsal with immense expenditure on the part of the scene-painter and costumier.

Need we tell with what triumphant success the "Brigand's Bride" was received? All the Irish sub-editors the next morning took care to have such an account of it as made

Miss Ligonier and Baroski die with envy. All the reporters who could spare time were in the boxes to support their friend's work. All the journeymen tailors of the establishment of Linsey, Woolsey, and Co. had pit tickets given to them, and applauded with all their might. All Mr. Walker's friends of the "Regent Club" lined the side-boxes with white kid gloves; and in a little box by themselves sat Mrs. Crump and Mr. Woolsey, a great deal too much agitated to applaud—so agitated that Woolsey even forgot to fling down the *bouquet* he had brought for the Ravenswing.

But there was no lack of these horticultural ornaments. The theatre servants wheeled away a wheelbarrowful (which were flung on the stage the next night over again); and Morgiana blushing, panting, weeping, was led off by Mr. Poppleton, the eminent tenor, who had crowned her with one of the most conspicuous of the chaplets.

Here she flew to her husband, and flung her arms round his neck. He was flirting behind the side-scenes with Mademoiselle Flicflac, who had been dancing in the divertissement; and was probably the only man in the theatre of those who witnessed the embrace that did not care for it. Even Slang was affected, and said with perfect sincerity that he wished he had been in Walker's place. The manager's fortune was made—at least for the season. He acknowledged so much to Walker, who took a week's salary for his wife in advance that very night.

There was, as usual, a grand supper in the green-room. The terrible Mr. Bludyer appeared in a new coat of the well-known Woolsey cut, and the little tailor himself and Mrs. Crump were not the least happy of the party. But when the Ravenswing took Woolsey's hand, and said she never would have been there but for him, Mr. Walker looked very grave, and hinted to her that she must not, in her position, encourage the attention of persons in that rank of life. "I shall pay," said he proudly, "every farthing that is owing to Mr. Woolsey, and shall employ him for the future. But you understand, my love, that one cannot at one's own table receive one's own tailor."

Slang proposed Morgiana's health in a tremendous speech, which elicited cheers, and laughter, and sobs, such as only

managers have the art of drawing from the theatrical gentlemen and ladies in their employ. It was observed, especially among the chorus-singers at the bottom of the table, that their emotion was intense. They had a meeting the next day, and voted a piece of plate to Adolphus Slang, Esq., for his eminent services in the cause of the drama.

Walker returned thanks for his lady. That was, he said, the proudest moment of his life. He was proud to think that he had educated her for the stage, happy to think that his sufferings had not been in vain, and that his exertions in her behalf were crowned with full success. In her name and his own he thanked the company, and sat down, and was once more particularly attentive to Mademoiselle Flicflac.

Then came an oration from Sir George Thrum, in reply to Slang's toast to *him*. It was very much to the same effect as the speech by Walker, the two gentlemen attributing to themselves individually the merit of bringing out Mrs. Walker. He concluded by stating that he should always hold Mrs. Walker as the daughter of his heart, and to the last moment of his life should love and cherish her. It is certain that Sir George was exceedingly elated that night, and would have been scolded by his lady on his return home, but for the triumph of the evening.

Mulligan's speech of thanks, as author of the "Brigand's Bride," was, it must be confessed, extremely tedious. It seemed there would be no end to it; when he got upon the subject of Ireland especially, which somehow was found to be intimately connected with the interests of music and the theatre. Even the choristers pooh-poohed this speech, coming though it did from the successful author, whose songs of wine, love, and battle they had been repeating that night.

The "Brigand's Bride" ran for many nights. Its choruses were tuned on the organs of the day. Morgiana's airs, "The Rose upon my Balcony" and "The Lightning on the Cataract" (recitative and scena) were on everybody's lips, and brought so many guineas to Sir George Thrum that he was encouraged to have his portrait engraved, which still may be seen in the music-shops. Not many persons, I believe, bought proof impressions of the plate, price two guineas; whereas, on the contrary, all the young clerks in banks, and

all the *fast* young men of the universities, had pictures of the Ravenswing in their apartments—as Biondetta (the brigand's bride), as Zelyma (in the "Nuptials of Benares"), as Barbareska (in the "Mine of Tobolsk"), and in all her famous characters. In the latter she disguises herself as an Uhlan, in order to save her father, who is in prison; and the Ravenswing looked so fascinating in this costume in pantaloons and yellow boots, that Slang was for having her instantly in Captain Macheath, whence arose their quarrel.

She was replaced at Slang's theatre by Snooks, the rhinoceros-tamer, with his breed of wild buffaloes. Their success was immense. Slang gave a supper, at which all the company burst into tears; and assembling in the green-room next day, they, as usual, voted a piece of plate to Adolphus Slang, Esq., for his eminent services to the drama.

In the Captain Macheath dispute Mr. Walker would have had his wife yield; but on this point, and for once, she disobeyed her husband, and left the theatre. And when Walker cursed her (according to his wont) for her abominable selfishness and disregard of his property, she burst into tears, and said she had spent but twenty guineas on herself and baby during the year, that her theatrical dressmaker's bills were yet unpaid, and that she had never asked him how much he spent on that odious French *figurante*.

All this was true, except about the French *figurante*. Walker, as the lord and master, received all Morgiana's earnings, and spent them as a gentleman should. He gave very neat dinners at a cottage in the Regent's Park (Mr. and Mrs. Walker lived in Green Street, Grosvenor Square); he played a good deal at the "Regent;" but as to the French *figurante*, it must be confessed that Mrs. Walker was in a sad error: *that* lady and the Captain had parted long ago; it was Madame Dolores de Tras-os-Montes who inhabited the cottage in St. John's Wood now.

But if some little errors of this kind might be attributable to the Captain, on the other hand, when his wife was in the provinces, he was the most attentive of husbands—made all her bargains, and received every shilling before he would permit her to sing a note. Thus he prevented her from being cheated, as a person of her easy temper, doubtless, would

have been, by designing managers and needy concert-givers. They always travelled with four horses; and Walker was adored in every one of the principal hotels in England. The waiters flew at his bell. The chambermaids were afraid he was a sad, naughty man, and thought his wife no such great beauty; the landlords preferred him to any duke. *He* never looked at their bills, not he! In fact his income was at least four thousand a year for some years of his life.

Master Woolsey Walker was put to Dr. Wapshot's seminary, whence, after many disputes on the doctor's part as to getting his half-year's accounts paid, and after much complaint of ill-treatment on the little boy's side, he was withdrawn, and placed under the care of the Rev. Mr. Swishtail, at Turnham Green, where all his bills are paid by his godfather, now the head of the firm of Woolsey and Co.

As a gentleman, Mr. Walker still declines to see him; but he has not, as far as I have heard, paid the sums of money which he threatened to refund, and, as he is seldom at home, the worthy tailor can come to Green Street at his leisure. He and Mrs. Crump and Mrs. Walker often take the omnibus to Brentford, and a cake with them to little Woolsey at school, to whom the tailor says he will leave every shilling of his property.

The Walkers have no other children; but when she takes her airing in the Park, she always turns away at the sight of a low phaeton, in which sits a woman with rouged cheeks, and a great number of overdressed children with a French *bonne*, whose name, I am given to understand, is Madame Dolores de Tras-os-Montes. Madame de Tras-os-Montes always puts a great gold glass to her eye as the Ravenswing's carriage passes, and looks into it with a sneer. The two coachmen used always to exchange queer winks at each other in the ring, until Madame de Tras-os-Montes lately adopted a tremendous chasseur, with huge whiskers and a green and gold livery, since which time the formerly named gentlemen do not recognize each other.

The Ravenswing's life is one of perpetual triumph on the stage; and as every one of the fashionable men about town have been in love with her, you may fancy what a pretty character she has. Lady Thrum would die sooner than

speak to that unhappy young woman; and, in fact, the Thrums have a new pupil, who is a siren without the dangerous qualities of one, who has the person of a Venus and the mind of a Muse, and who is coming out at one of the theatres immediately. Baroski says, "De liddle Rafenschwing is just as font of me as effer!" People are very shy about receiving her in society! and when she goes to sing at a concert, Miss Prim starts up and skurries off in a state of the greatest alarm, lest "that person" should speak to her.

Walker is voted a good, easy, rattling, gentlemanly fellow, and nobody's enemy but his own. His wife, they say, is dreadfully extravagant; and, indeed, since his marriage, and in spite of his wife's large income, he has been in the Bench several times. But she signs some bills, and he comes out again, and is as gay and genial as ever. All mercantile speculations he has, wisely, long since given up. He likes to throw a main of an evening, as I have said, and to take his couple of bottles at dinner. On Friday he attends at the theatre for his wife's salary, and transacts no other business during the week. He grows exceedingly stout, dyes his hair, and has a bloated purple look about the nose and cheeks, very different from that which first charmed the heart of Morgiana.

By the way, Eglantine has been turned out of the Bower of Bloom, and now keeps a shop at Tunbridge Wells. Going down thither last year without a razor, I asked a fat, seedy man, lolling in a faded nankeen jacket at the door of a tawdry little shop in the Pantiles, to shave me. He said in reply, "Sir, I do not practise in that branch of the profession!" and turned back into the little shop. It was Archibald Eglantine. But in the wreck of his fortunes he still has his captain's uniform, and his Grand Cross of the Elephant and Castle of Panama.

POSTSCRIPT.

G. FITZ-BOODLE, ESQ., TO O. YORKE, ESQ.

ZUM TRIERISCHEN HOF, COBLENZ, *July* 10, 1843.

MY DEAR YORKE,—The story of the Ravenswing was written a long time since, and I never could account for the bad

taste of the publishers of the metropolis who refused it an insertion in their various magazines. This fact would never have been alluded to, but for the following circumstance:—

Only yesterday, as I was dining at this excellent hotel, I remarked a bald-headed gentleman in a blue coat and brass buttons, who looked like a colonel on half-pay, and by his side a lady and a little boy of twelve, whom the gentleman was cramming with an amazing quantity of cherries and cakes. A stout old dame in a wonderful cap and ribands was seated by the lady's side, and it was easy to see they were English, and I thought I had already made their acquaintance elsewhere.

The younger of the ladies at last made a bow with an accompanying blush.

"Surely," said I, "I have the honour of speaking to Mrs. Ravenswing?"

"Mrs. Woolsey, sir," said the gentleman. "My wife has long since left the stage;" and at this the old lady in the wonderful cap trod on my toes very severely, and nodded her head and all her ribands in a most mysterious way. Presently the two ladies rose and left the table, the elder declaring that she heard the baby crying.

"Woolsey, my dear, go with your mamma," said Mr. Woolsey, patting the boy on the head. The young gentleman obeyed the command, carrying off a plate of macaroons with him.

"Your son is a fine boy, sir," said I.

"My step-son, sir," answered Mr. Woolsey; and added in a louder voice, "I knew you, Mr. Fitz-Boodle, at once, but did not mention your name for fear of agitating my wife. She don't like to have the memory of old times renewed, sir; her former husband, whom you knew, Captain Walker, made her very unhappy. He died in America, sir, of this, I fear" (pointing to the bottle), "and Mrs. W. quitted the stage a year before I quitted business. Are you going on to Wiesbaden?"

They went off in their carriage that evening, the boy on the box making great efforts to blow out of the postilion's tasselled horn.

I am glad that poor Morgiana is happy at last, and hasten to inform you of the fact. I am going to visit the old haunts of my youth at Pumpernickel. Adieu.—Yours,

G. F.-B.

MR. AND MRS. FRANK BERRY.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIGHT AT SLAUGHTER HOUSE.

I AM very fond of reading about battles, and have most of Marlborough's and Wellington's at my fingers' ends; but the most tremendous combat I ever saw, and one that interests me to think of more than Malplaquet or Waterloo (which, by the way, has grown to be a downright nuisance, so much do men talk of it after dinner, prating most disgustingly about "the Prussians coming up," and what not)—I say the most tremendous combat known was that between Berry and Biggs the gown-boy, which commenced in a certain place called Middle Briars, which is situated in the midst of the cloisters that run along the side of the playground of Slaughter House School, near Smithfield, London. It was there, Madam, that your humble servant had the honour of acquiring, after six years' labour, that immense fund of classical knowledge which in after life has been so exceedingly useful to him.

The circumstances of the quarrel were these:—Biggs, the gown-boy (a man who, in those days, I thought was at least seven feet high, and was quite thunderstruck to find in after life that he measured no more than five feet four), was what we called "second cock" of the school; the first cock was a great big, good-humoured, lazy, fair-haired fellow, Old Hawkins by name, who, because he was large and good-humoured, hurt nobody. Biggs, on the contrary, was a sad bully; he had half a dozen fags, and beat them all unmercifully. Moreover, he had a little brother, a boarder in Potky's house, whom, as a matter of course, he hated and maltreated worse than any one else.

Well, one day, because young Biggs had not brought his brother his hoops, or had not caught a ball at cricket, or for some other equally good reason, Biggs the elder so belaboured the poor little fellow, that Berry, who was sauntering by, and saw the dreadful blows which the elder brother was dealing to the younger with his hockey-stick, felt a compassion for the little fellow (perhaps he had a jealousy against Biggs, and wanted to try a few rounds with him, but that I can't vouch for); however, Berry, passing by, stopped and said, "Don't you think you have thrashed the boy enough, Biggs?" He spoke this in a very civil tone, for he never would have thought of interfering rudely with the sacred privilege that an upper boy at a public school always has of beating a junior, especially when they happen to be brothers.

The reply of Biggs, as might be expected, was to hit young Biggs with the hockey-stick twice as hard as before, until the little wretch howled with pain. "I suppose it's no business of yours, Berry," said Biggs, thumping away all the while, and laid on worse and worse.

Until Berry (and, indeed, little Biggs) could bear it no longer, and the former, bouncing forward, wrenched the stick out of old Biggs' hands, and sent it whirling out of the cloister window, to the great wonder of a crowd of us small boys who were looking on. Little boys always like to see a little companion of their own soundly beaten.

"There!" said Berry, looking into Biggs' face, as much as to say, "I've gone and done it;" and he added to the brother, "Scud away, you little thief! I've saved you this time."

"Stop, young Biggs!" roared out his brother, after a pause; "and I'll break every bone in your infernal, scoundrelly skin!"

Young Biggs looked at Berry, then at his brother, then came at his brother's order, as if back to be beaten again, but lost heart and ran away as fast as his little legs could carry him.

"I'll do for him another time," said Biggs. "Here, under-boy, take my coat;" and we all began to gather round, and formed a ring.

"We had better wait till after school, Biggs," cried Berry,

quite cool, but looking a little pale. "There are only five minutes now, and it will take you more than that to thrash me."

Biggs upon this committed a great error, for he struck Berry slightly across the face with the back of his hand, saying, "You are in a funk." But this was a feeling which Frank Berry did not in the least entertain; for in reply to Biggs' backhander, and as quick as thought, and with all his might and main—pong! he delivered a blow upon old Biggs' nose that made the claret spirt, and sent the second cock down to the ground as if he had been shot.

He was up again, however, in a minute, his face white and gashed with blood, his eyes glaring—a ghastly spectacle. And Berry, meanwhile, had taken his coat off; and by this time there were gathered in the cloisters, on all the windows, and upon each other's shoulders, one hundred and twenty young gentlemen at the very least, for the news had gone out through the playground of "a fight between Berry and Biggs."

But Berry was quite right in his remark about the propriety of deferring the business, for at this minute Mr. Chip, the second master, came down the cloisters going into school, and grinned in his queer way as he saw the state of Biggs' face. "Holloa, Mr. Biggs," said he, "I suppose you have run against a finger-post." That was the regular joke with us at school, and you may be sure we all laughed heartily—as we always did when Mr. Chip made a joke, or anything like a joke. "You had better go to the pump, sir, and get yourself washed, and not let Dr. Buckle see you in that condition." So saying, Mr. Chip disappeared to his duties in the under-school, whither all we little boys followed him.

It was Wednesday, a half-holiday, as everybody knows, and boiled-beef day at Slaughter House. I was in the same boarding-house with Berry, and we all looked to see whether he ate a good dinner, just as one would examine a man who was going to be hanged. I recollected, in after life, in Germany, seeing a friend who was going to fight a duel eat five larks for his breakfast, and thought I had seldom witnessed greater courage. Berry ate moderately of the boiled beef—*boiled child* we used to call it at school, in our elegant, jocular

way. He knew a great deal better than to load his stomach upon the eve of such a contest as was going to take place.

Dinner was very soon over, and Mr. Chip, who had been all the while joking Berry, and pressing him to eat, called him up into his study, to the great disappointment of us all, for we thought he was going to prevent the fight; but no such thing. The Rev. Edward Chip took Berry into his study, and poured him out two glasses of port wine, which he made him take with a biscuit, and patted him on the back, and went off. I have no doubt he was longing, like all of us, to see the battle; but etiquette, you know, forbade.

When we went out into the green, Old Hawkins was there —the great Hawkins, the cock of the school. I have never seen the man since, but still think of him as of something awful, gigantic, mysterious; he who could thrash everybody, who could beat all the masters: how we longed for him to put in his hand and lick Buckle! He was a dull boy, not very high in the school, and had all his exercises written for him. Buckle knew this, but respected him; never called him up to read Greek plays; passed over all his blunders, which were many; let him go out of half-holidays into the town as he pleased: how should any man dare to stop him—the great, calm, magnanimous, silent Strength! They say he licked a Life-Guardsman: I wonder whether it was Shaw, who killed all those Frenchmen?—no, it could not be Shaw, for he was dead *au champ d'honneur;* but he *would* have licked Shaw if he had been alive. A bargeman I know he licked, at Jack Randall's in Slaughter House Lane. Old Hawkins was too lazy to play at cricket; he sauntered all day in the sunshine about the green, accompanied by little Tippins, who was in the sixth form, laughed and joked at Hawkins eternally, and was the person who wrote all his exercises.

Instead of going into town this afternoon, Hawkins remained at Slaughter House, to see the great fight between the second and third cocks.

The different masters of the school kept boarding-houses (such as Potky's, Chip's, Wicken's, Pinney's, and so on), and the playground, or "green," as it was called, although the only thing green about the place was the broken glass on

the walls that separate Slaughter House from Wilderness Row and Goswell Street—(many a time have I seen Mr. Pickwick look out of his window in that street, though we did not know him then)—the playground, or green, was common to all. But if any stray boy from Potky's was found, for instance, in, or entering into, Chip's house, the most dreadful tortures were practised upon him—as I can answer in my own case.

Fancy, then, our astonishment at seeing a little three-foot wretch, of the name of Wills, one of Hawkins' fags (they were both in Potky's), walk undismayed amongst us lions at Chip's house, as the "rich and rare" young lady did in Ireland. We were going to set upon him and devour or otherwise maltreat him, when he cried out in a little shrill, impertinent voice, "*Tell Berry I want him!*"

We all roared with laughter. Berry was in the sixth form, and Wills or any under-boy would as soon have thought of "wanting" him as I should of wanting the Duke of Wellington.

Little Wills looked round in an imperious kind of way. "Well," says he, stamping his foot, "do you hear? *Tell Berry that* HAWKINS *wants him!*"

As for resisting the law of Hawkins, you might as soon think of resisting immortal Jove. Berry and Tolmash, who was to be his bottle-holder, made their appearance immediately, and walked out into the green, where Hawkins was waiting, and, with an irresistible audacity that only belonged to himself, in the face of nature and all the regulations of the place, was smoking a cigar. When Berry and Tolmash found him, the three began slowly pacing up and down in the sunshine, and we little boys watched them.

Hawkins moved his arms and hands every now and then, and was evidently laying down the law about boxing. We saw his fists darting out every now and then with mysterious swiftness, hitting one, two, quick as thought, as if in the face of an adversary; now his left hand went up, as if guarding his own head; now his immense right fist dreadfully flapped the air, as if punishing his imaginary opponent's miserable ribs. The conversation lasted for some ten minutes, about which time gown-boys' dinner was over, and we saw these

youths, in their black, horned-button jackets and knee-breeches, issuing from their door in the cloisters. There were no hoops, no cricket-bats, as usual on a half-holiday. Who would have thought of play in expectation of such tremendous sport as was in store for us?

Towering among the gown-boys, of whom he was the head and the tyrant, leaning upon Bushby's arm, and followed at a little distance by many curious, pale, awe-stricken boys, dressed in his black silk stockings, which he always sported, and with a crimson bandanna tied round his waist, came BIGGS. His nose was swollen with the blow given before school, but his eyes flashed fire. He was laughing and sneering with Bushby, and evidently intended to make minced meat of Berry.

The betting began pretty freely: the bets were against poor Berry. Five to three were offered—in ginger-beer. I took six to four in raspberry open tarts. The upper boys carried the thing further still; and I know for a fact that Swang's book amounted to four pound three (but he hedged a good deal), and Tittery lost seventeen shillings in a single bet to Pitts, who took the odds.

As Biggs and his party arrived, I heard Hawkins say to Berry, "For heaven's sake, my boy, fib with your right, and *mind his left hand!*"

Middle Briars was voted to be too confined a space for the combat, and it was agreed that it should take place behind the under-school, in the shade, whither we all went. Hawkins, with his immense silver hunting-watch, kept the time; and water was brought from the pump close to Notley the pastrycook's, who did not admire fisticuffs at all on half-holidays, for the fights kept the boys away from his shop. Gutley was the only fellow in the school who remained faithful to him, and he sat on the counter—the great gormandizing brute!—eating tarts the whole day.

This famous fight, as every Slaughter House man knows, lasted for two hours and twenty-nine minutes, by Hawkins's immense watch. All this time the air resounded with cries of "Go it, Berry!" "Go it, Biggs!" "Pitch into him!" "Give it him!" and so on. Shall I describe the hundred and two rounds of the combat?—No!—It would occupy too

much space, and the taste for such descriptions has passed away.*

1st round. Both the combatants fresh, and in prime order. The weight and inches somewhat on the gown-boy's side. Berry goes gallantly in, and delivers a clinker on the gown-boy's jaw. Biggs makes play with his left. Berry down.

* * * * *

4th round. Claret drawn in profusion from the gown-boy's grogshop. (He went down, and had his front tooth knocked out; but the blow cut Berry's knuckles a great deal.)

* * * * *

15th round. Chancery. Fibbing. Biggs makes dreadful work with his left. Break away. Rally. Biggs down. Betting still six to four on the gown-boy.

* * * * *

20th round. The men both dreadfully punished. Berry somewhat shy of his adversary's left hand.

* * * * *

29th to 42nd round. The Chipsite all this while breaks away from the gown-boy's left, and goes down on a knee. Six to four on the gown-boy, until the fortieth round, when the bets became equal.

* * * * *

102nd and last round. For half an hour the men had stood up to each other, but were almost too weary to strike. The gown-boy's face hardly to be recognized, swollen and streaming with blood. The Chipsite in a similar condition, and still more punished about his side from his enemy's left hand. Berry gives a blow at his adversary's face, and falls over him as he falls.

The gown-boy can't come up to time. And thus ended the great fight of Berry and Biggs.

* * * * *

And what, pray, has this horrid description of a battle and a parcel of schoolboys to do with *Men's Wives?*

* As it is very probable that many fair readers may not approve of the extremely forcible language in which the combat is depicted, I beg them to skip it and pass on to the next chapter, and to remember that it has been modelled on the style of the very best writers of the sporting papers.

What has it to do with *Men's Wives?*—A great deal more, madam, than you think for. Only read Chapter II., and you shall hear.

CHAPTER II.

THE COMBAT AT VERSAILLES.

I AFTERWARDS came to be Berry's fag, and, though beaten by him daily, he allowed, of course, no one else to lay a hand upon me, and I got no more thrashing than was good for me. Thus an intimacy grew up between us; and after he left Slaughter House, and went into the dragoons, the honest fellow did not forget his old friend, but actually made his appearance one day in the playground in moustaches and a braided coat, and gave me a gold pencil-case and a couple of sovereigns. I blushed when I took them, but take them I did; and I think the thing I almost best recollect in my life, is the sight of Berry getting behind an immense bay cab-horse, which was held by a correct little groom, and was waiting near the school in Slaughter House Square. He proposed, too, to have me to "Long's," where he was lodging for the time; but this invitation was refused on my behalf by Dr. Buckle, who said, and possibly with correctness, that I should get little good by spending my holiday with such a scapegrace.

Once afterwards he came to see me at Christ Church, and we made a show of writing to one another, and didn't, and always had a hearty mutual goodwill; and though we did not quite burst into tears on parting, were yet quite happy when occasion threw us together, and so almost lost sight of each other. I heard lately that Berry was married, and am rather ashamed to say that I was not so curious as even to ask the maiden name of his lady.

Last summer I was at Paris, and had gone over to Versailles to meet a party, one of which was a young lady to whom I was tenderly..... But, never mind. The day was rainy, and the party did not keep its appointment; and after yawning through the interminable palace picture-galleries, and then making an attempt to smoke a cigar in the Palace

garden—for which crime I was nearly run through the body by a rascally sentinel—I was driven, perforce, into the great bleak, lonely *Place* before the Palace, with its roads branching off to all the towns in the world which Louis and Napoleon once intended to conquer, and there enjoyed my favourite pursuit at leisure, and was meditating whether I should go back to "Véfour's" for dinner, or patronize my friend M. Duboux of the "Hôtel des Réservoirs," who gives not only a good dinner, but as dear a one as heart can desire. I was, I say, meditating these things, when a carriage passed by. It was a smart, low calash, with a pair of bay horses and a postilion in a drab jacket, that twinkled with innumerable buttons, and I was too much occupied in admiring the build of the machine, and the extreme tightness of the fellow's inexpressibles, to look at the personages within the carriage, when the gentleman roared out "Fitz!" and the postilion pulled up, and the lady gave a shrill scream, and a little black-muzzled spaniel began barking and yelling with all his might, and a man with moustaches jumped out of the vehicle, and began shaking me by the hand.

"Drive home, John," said the gentleman. "I'll be with you, my love, in an instant—it's an old friend. Fitz, let me present you to Mrs. Berry."

The lady made an exceedingly gentle inclination of her black velvet bonnet, and said, "Pray, my love, remember that it is just dinner-time. However, never mind *me*." And with another slight toss and a nod to the postilion, that individual's white leather breeches began to jump up and down again in the saddle, and the carriage disappeared, leaving me shaking my old friend Berry by the hand.

He had long quitted the army, but still wore his military beard, which gave to his fair pink face a fierce and lionlike look. He was extraordinarily glad to see me, as only men are glad who live in a small town or in dull company. There is no destroyer of friendships like London, where a man has no time to think of his neighbour, and has far too many friends to care for them. He told me in a breath of his marriage, and how happy he was, and straight insisted that I must come home to dinner, and see more of Angelica, who had invited me herself—didn't I hear her?

"Mrs. Berry asked *you*, Frank; but I certainly did not hear her ask *me!*"

"She would not have mentioned the dinner but that she meant me to ask you. I know she did!" cried Frank Berry. "And, besides—hang it—I'm master of the house. So come you shall. No ceremony, old boy—one or two friends—snug family party—and we'll talk of old times over a bottle of claret."

There did not seem to me to be the slightest objection to this arrangement, except that my boots were muddy and my coat of the morning sort. But as it was quite impossible to go to Paris and back again in a quarter of an hour, and as a man may dine with perfect comfort to himself in a frock-coat, it did not occur to me to be particularly squeamish, or to decline an old friend's invitation upon a pretext so trivial.

Accordingly we walked to a small house in the Avenue de Paris, and were admitted first into a small garden ornamented by a grotto, a fountain, and several nymphs in plaster-of-Paris, then up a mouldy old steep stair into a hall, where a statue of Cupid and another of Venus welcomed us with their eternal simper; then through a *salle-à-manger*, where covers were laid for six; and finally to a little saloon, where Fido the dog began to howl furiously according to his wont.

It was one of the old pavilions that had been built for a pleasure-house in the gay days of Versailles, ornamented with abundance of damp Cupids and cracked gilt cornices, and old mirrors let into the walls, and gilded once, but now painted a dingy French white. The long low windows looked into the court, where the fountain played its ceaseless dribble, surrounded by numerous rank creepers and weedy flowers, but in the midst of which the statues stood with their bases quite moist and green.

I hate fountains and statues in dark, confined places: that cheerless, endless plashing of water is the most inhospitable sound ever heard. The stiff grin of those French statues, or ogling Canova Graces, is by no means more happy, I think, than the smile of a skeleton, and not so natural. Those little pavilions, in which the old *roués* sported, were never meant to be seen by daylight, depend on't. They were lighted up with a hundred wax candles, and the little

fountain yonder was meant only to cool their claret. And so, my first impression of Berry's place of abode was rather a dismal one. However, I heard him in the *salle-à-manger* drawing the corks, which went off with a *cloop*, and that consoled me.

As for the furniture of the rooms appertaining to the Berrys, there was a harp in a leather case, and a piano, and a flute-box, and a huge tambour with a Saracen's nose just begun, and likewise on the table a multiplicity of those little gilt books, half sentimental and half religious, which the wants of the age and of our young ladies have produced in such numbers of late. I quarrel with no lady's taste in that way; but heigho! I had rather that Mrs. Fitz-Boodle should read "Humphrey Clinker!"

Beside these works there was a "Peerage" of course. What genteel family was ever without one?

I was making for the door to see Frank drawing the corks, and was bounced at by the amiable little black-muzzled spaniel, who fastened his teeth in my pantaloons, and received a polite kick in consequence, which sent him howling to the other end of the room; and the animal was just in the act of performing that feat of agility, when the door opened and madame made her appearance. Frank came behind her, peering over her shoulder with rather an anxious look.

Mrs. Berry is an exceedingly white and lean person. She has thick eyebrows, which meet rather dangerously over her nose, which is Grecian, and a small mouth with no lips—a sort of feeble pucker in the face, as it were. Under her eyebrows are a pair of enormous eyes, which she is in the habit of turning constantly ceilingwards. Her hair is rather scarce, and worn in bandeaux; and she commonly mounts a sprig of laurel, or a dark flower or two, which, with the sham *tour*—I believe that is the name of the knob of artificial hair that many ladies sport—gives her a rigid and classical look. She is dressed in black, and has invariably the neatest of silk stockings and shoes; for, forsooth, her foot is a fine one, and she always sits with it before her, looking at it, stamping it, and admiring it a great deal. "Fido," she says to her spaniel, "you have almost crushed my poor foot;" or, "Frank," to her husband, "bring me a footstool;" or, "I suffer so

from cold in the feet," and so forth ; but be the conversation what it will, she is always sure to put *her foot* into it.

She invariably wears on her neck the miniature of her late father, Sir George Catacomb, apothecary to George III.; and she thinks those two men the greatest the world ever saw. She was born in Baker Street, Portman Square, and that is saying almost enough of her. She is as long, as genteel, and as dreary as that deadly-lively place, and sports, by way of ornament, her papa's hatchment, as it were, as every tenth Baker Street house has taught her.

What induced such a jolly fellow as Frank Berry to marry Miss Angelica Catacomb, no one can tell. He met her, he says, at a ball at Hampton Court, where his regiment was quartered, and where to this day lives "her aunt, Lady Pash." She alludes perpetually in conversation to that celebrated lady; and if you look in the "Baronetage" to the pedigree of the Pash family, you may see manuscript notes by Mrs. Frank Berry, relative to them and herself. Thus, when you see in print that Sir John Pash married Angelica, daughter of Graves Catacomb, Esq., in a neat hand you find written, *and sister of the late Sir George Catacomb, of Baker Street, Portman Square:* "A. B." follows of course. It is a wonder how fond ladies are of writing in books and signing their charming initials! Mrs. Berry's before-mentioned little gilt books are scored with pencil marks, or occasionally at the margin with a !—note of interjection, or the words "*Too true, A. B.*," and so on. Much may be learned with regard to lovely woman by a look at the book she reads in; and I had gained no inconsiderable knowledge of Mrs. Berry by the ten minutes spent in the drawing-room, while she was at her toilet in the adjoining bedchamber.

"You have often heard me talk of George Fitz," says Berry, with an appealing look to madame.

"Very often," answered his lady, in a tone which clearly meant "a great deal too much." "Pray, sir," continued she, looking at my boots with all her might, "are we to have your company at dinner?"

"Of course you are, my dear; what else do you think he came for? You would not have the man go back to Paris to get his evening coat, would you?"

"At least, my love, I hope you will go and put on *yours*, and change those muddy boots. Lady Pash will be here in five minutes, and you know Dobus is as punctual as clockwork." Then turning to me with a sort of apology that was as consoling as a box on the ear, "We have some friends at dinner, sir, who are rather particular persons; but I am sure, when they hear that you only came on a sudden invitation, they will excuse your morning dress.—Bah, what a smell of smoke!"

With this speech madame placed herself majestically on a sofa, put out her foot, called Fido, and relapsed into an icy silence. Frank had long since evacuated the premises, with a rueful look at his wife, but never daring to cast a glance at me. I saw the whole business at once: here was this lion of a fellow tamed down by a she Van Amburgh, and fetching and carrying at her orders a great deal more obediently than her little, yowling, black-muzzled darling of a Fido.

I am not, however, to be tamed so easily, and was determined in this instance not to be in the least disconcerted, or to show the smallest sign of ill-humour; so, to *renouer* the conversation, I began about Lady Pash.

"I heard you mention the name of Pash, I think?" said I. "I know a lady of that name, and a very ugly one it is too."

"It is most probably not the same person," answered Mrs. Berry, with a look which intimated that a fellow like me could never have had the honour to know so exalted a person.

"I mean old Lady Pash of Hampton Court. Fat woman—fair, ain't she?—and wears an amethyst in her forehead, has one eye, a blond wig, and dresses in light green?"

"Lady Pash, sir, is MY AUNT," answered Mrs. Berry (not altogether displeased, although she expected money from the old lady; but you know we love to hear our friends abused when it can be safely done).

"Oh, indeed! She was a daughter of old Catacomb's of Windsor, I remember, the undertaker. They called her husband Callipash, and her ladyship Pishpash. So you see, madam, that I know the whole family!"

"Mr. Fitz-Simons!" exclaimed Mrs. Berry, rising, "I am not accustomed to hear nicknames applied to myself and my

family, and must beg you, when you honour us with your company, to spare our feelings as much as possible. Mr. Catacomb had the confidence of his SOVEREIGN, sir, and Sir John Pash was of Charles the Second's creation. The one was my uncle, sir; the other my grandfather!"

"My dear madam, I am extremely sorry, and most sincerely apologize for my inadvertence. But you owe me an apology too: my name is not Fitz-Simons, but Fitz-Boodle."

"What! of Boodle Hall—my husband's old friend; of Charles the First's creation? My dear sir, I beg you a thousand pardons, and am delighted to welcome a person of whom I have heard Frank say so much. Frank!" (to Berry, who soon entered in very glossy boots and a white waistcoat), "do you know, darling, I mistook Mr. Fitz-Boodle for Mr. Fitz-Simons, that horrid Irish horse-dealing person; and I never, never, never can pardon myself for being so rude to him."

The big eyes here assumed an expression that was intended to kill me outright with kindness: from being calm, still, reserved, Angelica suddenly became gay, smiling, confidential, and *folâtre*. She told me she had heard I was a sad creature, and that she intended to reform me, and that I must come and see Frank a great deal.

Now, although Mr. Fitz-Simons, for whom I was mistaken, is as low a fellow as ever came out of Dublin, and having been a captain in somebody's army, is now a black-leg and horse-dealer by profession; yet if I had brought him home to Mrs. Fitz-Boodle to dinner, I should have liked far better that that imaginary lady should have received him with decent civility, and not insulted the stranger within her husband's gates. And, although it was delightful to be received so cordially when the mistake was discovered, yet I found that *all* Berry's old acquaintances were by no means so warmly welcomed; for another old school-chum presently made his appearance, who was treated in a very different manner.

This was no other than poor Jack Butts, who is a sort of small artist and picture-dealer by profession, and was a day-boy at Slaughter House when we were there, and very serviceable in bringing in sausages, pots of pickles, and other articles

of merchandise, which we could not otherwise procure. The poor fellow has been employed, seemingly, in the same office of fetcher and carrier ever since, and occupied that post for Mrs. Berry. It was, "Mr. Butts, have you finished that drawing for Lady Pash's album?" and Butts produced it; and, "Did you match the silk for me at Delille's?" and there was the silk, bought, no doubt, with the poor fellow's last five francs; and, "Did you go to the furniture man in the Rue St. Jacques; and bring the canary seed, and call about my shawl at that odious, dawdling Madame Fichet's; and have you brought the guitar-strings?"

Butts hadn't brought the guitar-strings; and thereupon Mrs. Berry's countenance assumed the same terrible expression which I had formerly remarked in it, and which made me tremble for Berry.

"My dear Angelica," though said he with some spirit, "Jack Butts isn't a baggage-wagon, nor a Jack-of-all-trades. You make him paint pictures for your women's albums, and look after your upholsterer, and your canary bird, and your milliners, and turn rusty because he forgets your last message."

"I did not turn *rusty*, Frank, as you call it elegantly. I'm very much obliged to Mr. Butts for performing my commissions—very much obliged. And as for not paying for the pictures to which you so kindly allude, Frank, *I* should never have thought of offering payment for so paltry a service; but I'm sure I shall be happy to pay if Mr. Butts will send me in his bill."

"By Jove, Angelica, this is too much!" bounced out Berry; but the little matrimonial squabble was abruptly ended, by Berry's French man flinging open the door and announcing MILADI PASH and Doctor Dobus, which two personages made their appearance.

The person of old Pash has been already parenthetically described. But, quite different from her dismal niece in temperament, she is as jolly an old widow as ever wore weeds. She was attached somehow to the court, and has a multiplicity of stories about the princesses and the old king, to which Mrs. Berry never fails to call your attention in her grave, important way. Lady Pash has ridden many a time to the Windsor hounds; she made her husband become a

member of the Four-in-hand Club, and has numberless stories about Sir Godfrey Webster, Sir John Lade, and the old heroes of those times. She has lent a rouleau to Dick Sheridan, and remembers Lord Byron when he was a sulky slim young lad. She says Charles Fox was the pleasantest fellow she ever met with, and has not the slightest objection to inform you that one of the princes was very much in love with her. Yet somehow she is only fifty-two years old, and I have never been able to understand her calculation. One day or other before her eye went out, and before those pearly teeth of hers were stuck to her gums by gold, she must have been a pretty-looking body enough. Yet in spite of the latter inconvenience, she eats and drinks too much every day, and tosses off a glass of Maraschino with a trembling pudgy hand, every finger of which twinkles with a dozen, at least, of old rings. She has a story about every one of those rings, and a stupid one too. But there is always something pleasant, I think, in stupid family stories: they are good-hearted people who tell them.

As for Mrs. Muchit, nothing need be said of her. She is Pash's companion; she has lived with Lady Pash since the peace. Nor does my lady take any more notice of her than of the dust of the earth. She calls her "poor Muchit," and considers her a half-witted creature. Mrs. Berry hates her cordially, and thinks she is a designing toad-eater, who has formed a conspiracy to rob her of her aunt's fortune. She never spoke a word to poor Muchit during the whole of dinner, or offered to help her to anything on the table.

In respect to Dobus, he is an old Peninsular man, as you are made to know before you have been very long in his company, and, like most army surgeons, is a great deal more military in his looks and conversation than the combatant part of the forces. He has adopted the sham-Duke-of-Wellington air, which is by no means uncommon in veterans; and though one of the easiest and softest fellows in existence, speaks slowly and briefly, and raps out an oath or two occasionally, as it is said a certain great captain does. Besides the above, we sat down to table with Captain Goff, late of the —— Highlanders; the Rev. Lemuel Whey, who preaches at St. Germains; little Cutler, and the Frenchman,

who always *will* be at English parties on the Continent, and who, after making some frightful efforts to speak English, subsides, and is heard of no more. Young married ladies and heads of families generally have him for the purpose of waltzing; and in return he informs his friends of the club or the *café* that he has made the conquest of a *charmante Anglaise*. Listen to me, all family men who read this, and never *let an unmarried Frenchman into your doors*. This lecture alone is worth the price of the book. It is not that they do any harm in one case out of a thousand, Heaven forbid! but they mean harm. They look on our Susannahs with unholy, dishonest eyes. Hearken to two of the grinning rogues chattering together as they clink over the asphalt of the Boulevard with lacquered boots and plastered hair, and waxed moustaches, and turned-down shirt-collars, and stays, and goggling eyes, and hear how they talk of a good, simple, giddy, vain, dull Baker Street creature, and canvass her points, and show her letters, and insinuate—never mind, but I tell you my soul grows angry when I think of the same; and I can't hear of an Englishwoman marrying a Frenchman, without feeling a sort of shame and pity for her.*

To return to the guests. The Rev. Lemuel Whey is a tea-party man, with a curl on his forehead and a scented pocket-handkerchief. He ties his white neckcloth to a wonder, and I believe sleeps in it. He brings his flute with him; and prefers Handel, of course, but has one or two pet profane songs of the sentimental kind, and will occasionally lift up his little pipe in a glee. He does not dance, but the honest fellow would give the world to do it; and he leaves his clogs in the passage, though it is a wonder he wears them, for in the muddiest weather he never has a speck on his foot. He was at St. John's College, Cambridge, and was

* Every person who has lived abroad can, of course, point out a score of honourable exceptions to the case above hinted at, and knows many such unions in which it is the Frenchman who honours the English lady by marrying her. But it must be remembered that marrying in France means commonly *fortune-hunting;* and as for the respect in which marriage is held in France, let all the French novels in M. Rolandi's library be perused by those who wish to come to a decision upon the question.

rather gay for a term or two, he says. He is, in a word, full of the milk-and-water of human kindness, and his family lives near Hackney.

As for Goff, he has a huge, shining, bald forehead, and immense bristling, Indian-red whiskers. He wears white wash-leather gloves, drinks fairly, likes a rubber, and has a story for after-dinner, beginning, "Doctor, ye racklackt Sandy M'Lellan, who joined us in the West Indies. Wal, sir," etc. These and little Cutler made up the party.

Now it may not have struck all readers, but any sharp fellow conversant with writing must have found out long ago, that if there had been something exceedingly interesting to narrate with regard to this dinner at Frank Berry's, I should have come out with it a couple of pages since, nor have kept the public looking for so long a time at the dish-covers and ornaments of the table.

But the simple fact must now be told, that there was nothing of the slightest importance occurred at this repast, except that it gave me an opportunity of studying Mrs. Berry in many different ways, and, in spite of the extreme complaisance which she now showed me, of forming, I am sorry to say, a most unfavourable opinion of that fair lady. Truth to tell, I would much rather she should have been civil to Mrs. Muchit, than outrageously complimentary to your humble servant; and, as she professed not to know what on earth there was for dinner, would it not have been much more natural for her not to frown, and bob, and wink, and point, and pinch her lips as often as Monsieur Anatole, her French domestic, not knowing the ways of English dinner-tables, placed anything out of its due order? The allusions to Boodle Hall were innumerable, and I don't know any greater bore than to be obliged to talk of a place which belongs to one's elder brother. Many questions were likewise asked about the dowager and her Scotch relatives, the Plumduffs, about whom Lady Pash knew a great deal, having seen them at court and at Lord Melville's. Of course she had seen them at court and at Lord Melville's, as she might have seen thousands of Scotchmen besides; but what mattered it to me, who care not a jot for old Lady Fitz-Boodle? "When you write, you'll say you met an old friend

of her ladyship's," says Mrs. Berry, and I faithfully promised I would when I wrote; but if the New Post Office paid us for writing letters (as very possibly it will soon), I could not be bribed to send a line to old Lady Fitz.

In a word, I found that Berry, like many simple fellows before him, had made choice of an imperious, ill-humoured, and underbred female for a wife, and could see with half an eye that he was a great deal too much her slave.

The struggle was not over yet, however. Witness that little encounter before dinner; and once or twice the honest fellow replied rather smartly during the repast, taking especial care to atone as much as possible for his wife's inattention to Jack and Mrs. Muchit, by particular attention to those personages, whom he helped to everything round about and pressed perpetually to champagne: he drank but little himself, for his amiable wife's eye was constantly fixed on him.

Just at the conclusion of the dessert, madame, who had *boudé*'d Berry during dinner-time, became particularly gracious to her lord and master, and tenderly asked me if I did not think the French custom was a good one, of men leaving table with the ladies.

"Upon my word, ma'am," says I, "I think it's a most abominable practice."

"And so do I," says Cutler.

"A most abominable practice! Do you hear *that?*" cries Berry, laughing, and filling his glass.

"I'm sure, Frank, when we are alone you always come to the drawing-room," replies the lady sharply.

"Oh, yes! when we're alone, darling," says Berry, blushing; "but now we're *not* alone—ha, ha!—Anatole, du Bordeaux!"

"I'm sure they sat after the ladies at Carlton House—didn't they, Lady Pash?" says Dobus, who likes his glass.

"*That* they did!" says my lady, giving him a jolly nod.

"I racklackt," exclaims Captain Goff, "when I was in the Mauritius, that Mestress MacWhirter, who commanded the Saxty-Sackond, used to say, 'Mac, if ye want to get lively, ye'll not stop for more than two hours after the leddies have laft ye; if ye want to get drunk, ye'll just dine at the mass.' So ye see, Mestress Barry, what was Mac's allowance—haw, haw! Mester Whey, I'll trouble ye for the o-lives."

But although we were in a clear majority, that indomitable woman, Mrs. Berry, determined to make us all as uneasy as possible, and would take the votes all round. Poor Jack, of course, sided with her, and Whey said he loved a cup of tea and a little music better than all the wine of Bordeaux. As for the Frenchman, when Mrs. Berry said, "And what do you think, M. le Vicomte?"

"Vat you speak?" said M. de Blagueval, breaking silence for the first time during two hours; "yase—eh? to me you speak?"

"*Apry deeny, aimy-voo ally avec les dam?*"

"*Comment avec les dames?*"

"*Ally avec les dam com à Parry, ou resty avec les Messew com on Onglyterre?*"

"*Ah, madame! vous me le démandez?*" cries the little wretch, starting up in a theatrical way, and putting out his hand, which Mrs. Berry took; and with this the ladies left the room. Old Lady Pash trotted after her niece with her hand in Whey's, very much wondering at such practices, which were not in the least in vogue in the reign of George III.

Mrs. Berry cast a glance of triumph at her husband, at the defection, and Berry was evidently annoyed that three-eighths of his male forces had left him.

But fancy our delight and astonishment when in a minute they all three came back again—the Frenchman looking entirely astonished, and the parson and the painter both very queer. The fact is, old downright Lady Pash, who had never been in Paris in her life before, and had no notion of being deprived of her usual hour's respite and nap, said at once to Mrs. Berry, "My dear Angelica, you're surely not going to keep these three men here? Send them back to the dining-room, for I've a thousand things to say to you." And Angelica, who expects to inherit her aunt's property, of course did as she was bid; on which the old lady fell into an easy-chair, and fell asleep immediately—so soon, that is, as the shout caused by the reappearance of the three gentlemen in the dining-room had subsided.

I had meanwhile had some private conversation with little Cutler regarding the character of Mrs. Berry. "She's a regular screw," whispered he; "a regular Tartar. Berry shows

fight though sometimes, and I've known him have his own way for a week together. After dinner he is his own master, and hers when he has had his share of wine; and that's why she will never allow him to drink any."

Was it a wicked or was it a noble and honourable thought which came to us both at the same minute, to rescue Berry from his captivity? The ladies, of course, will give their verdict according to their gentle natures; but I know what men of courage will think, and by their jovial judgment will abide.

We received, then, the three lost sheep back into our innocent fold again with the most joyous shouting and cheering. We made Berry (who was, in truth, nothing loth) order up I don't know how much more claret. We obliged the Frenchman to drink *malgré lui;* and in the course of a short time we had poor Whey in such a state of excitement that he actually volunteered to sing a song, which he said he had heard at some very gay supper-party at Cambridge, and which begins :—

"A pye sat on a pear-tree,
A pye sat on a pear-tree,
A pye sat on a pear-tree,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho!"

Fancy Mrs. Berry's face as she looked in, in the midst of that bacchanalian ditty, when she saw no less a person than the Rev. Lemuel Whey carolling it!

"Is it you, my dear?" cries Berry, as brave now as any Petruchio. "Come in and sit down, and hear Whey's song."

"Lady Pash is asleep, Frank," said she.

"Well, darling, that's the very reason. Give Mrs. Berry a glass, Jack, will you?"

"Would you wake your aunt, sir?" hissed out madam.

"*Never mind me, love! I'm awake, and like it!*" cried the venerable Lady Pash from the *salon.* "Sing away, gentlemen!"

At which we all set up an audacious cheer, and Mrs. Berry flounced back to the drawing-room, but did not leave the door open that her aunt might hear our melodies.

Berry had by this time arrived at that confidential state to which a third bottle always brings the well-regulated mind,

and he made a clean confession to Cutler and myself of his numerous matrimonial annoyances. He was not allowed to dine out, he said, and but seldom to ask his friends to meet him at home. He never dared smoke a cigar for the life of him, not even in the stables. He spent the mornings dawdling in eternal shops, the evenings at endless tea-parties, or in reading poems or missionary tracts to his wife. He was compelled to take physic whenever she thought he looked a little pale, to change his shoes and stockings whenever he came in from a walk. "Look here," said he, opening his chest, and shaking his fist at Dobus—"look what Angelica and that infernal Dobus have brought me to."

I thought it might be a flannel waistcoat into which madam had forced him; but it was worse: I give you my word of honour it was a *pitch-plaster!*

We all roared at this, and the doctor as loud as any one; but he vowed that he had no hand in the pitch-plaster. It was a favourite family remedy of the late apothecary, Sir George Catacomb, and had been put on by Mrs. Berry's own fair hands.

When Anatole came in with coffee, Berry was in such high courage that he told him to go to the deuce with it; and we never caught sight of Lady Pash more, except when, muffled up to the nose, she passed through the *salle-à-manger* to go to her carriage, in which Dobus and the parson were likewise to be transported to Paris. "Be a man, Frank," says she, "and hold your own"—for the good old lady had taken her nephew's part in the matrimonial business—"and you, Mr. Fitz-Boodle, come and see him often. You're a good fellow, take old one-eyed Callipash's word for it. Shall I take you to Paris?"

Dear, kind Angelica, she had told her aunt all I said!

"Don't go, George," says Berry, squeezing me by the hand. So I said I was going to sleep at Versailles that night; but if she would give a convoy to Jack Butts, it would be conferring a great obligation on him; with which favour the old lady accordingly complied, saying to him, with great coolness, "Get up and sit with John in the rumble, Mr. What-d'ye-call-'im." The fact is, the good old soul despises an artist as much as she does a tailor.

Jack tripped to his place very meekly; and, "Remember Saturday," cried the doctor; and, "Don't forget Thursday," exclaimed the divine—"a bachelor's party, you know." And so the cavalcade drove thundering down the gloomy old Avenue de Paris.

The Frenchman, I forgot to say, had gone away exceedingly ill long before, and the reminiscences of "Thursday" and "Saturday" evoked by Dobus and Whey were, to tell the truth, parts of our conspiracy; for in the heat of Berry's courage we had made him promise to dine with us all round *en garçon*—with all except Captain Goff, who "racklacted" that he was engaged every day for the next three weeks, as indeed he is, to a thirty-sous ordinary which the gallant officer frequents when not invited elsewhere.

Cutler and I, then, were the last on the field; and though we were for moving away, Berry, whose vigour had, if possible, been excited by the bustle and colloquy in the night air, insisted upon dragging us back again, and actually proposed a grill for supper.

We found in the *salle-à-manger* a strong smell of an extinguished lamp, and Mrs. Berry was snuffing out the candles on the sideboard.

"Hullo, my dear!" shouts Berry; "easily, if you please! we've not done yet!"

"Not done yet, Mr. Berry!" groans the lady, in a hollow, sepulchral tone.

"No, Mrs. B., not done yet. We are going to have some supper—ain't we, George?"

"I think it's quite time to go home," said Mr. Fitz-Boodle (who, to say the truth, began to tremble himself).

"I think it is, sir; you are quite right, sir; you will pardon me, gentlemen, I have a bad headache, and will retire."

"Good-night, my dear!" said that audacious Berry.—"Anatole, tell the cook to broil a fowl and bring some wine."

If the loving couple had been alone, or if Cutler had not been an *attaché* to the Embassy, before whom she was afraid of making herself ridiculous, I am confident that Mrs. Berry would have fainted away on the spot, and that all Berry's courage would have tumbled down lifeless by the side of her. So she only gave a martyrized look, and left the room;

and while we partook of the very unnecessary repast, was good enough to sing some hymn tunes to an exceedingly slow movement in the next room, intimating that she was awake, and that, though suffering, she found her consolation in religion.

These melodies did not in the least add to our friend's courage. The devilled fowl had, somehow, no devil in it. The champagne in the glasses looked exceedingly flat and blue. The fact is, that Cutler and I were now both in a state of dire consternation, and soon made a move for our hats, and lighting each a cigar in the hall, made across the little green where the Cupids and nymphs were listening to the dribbling fountain in the dark.

"I'm hanged if I don't have a cigar too!" says Berry, rushing after us; and accordingly putting in his pocket a key about the size of a shovel, which hung by the little handle of the outer grille, forth he sallied, and joined us in our fumigation.

He stayed with us a couple of hours, and returned homewards in perfect good spirits, having given me his word of honour he would dine with us the next day. He put in his immense key into the grille, and unlocked it; but the gate would not open: *it was bolted within.*

He began to make a furious jangling and ringing at the bell, and in oaths, both French and English, called upon the recalcitrant Anatole.

After much tolling of the bell, a light came cutting across the crevices of the inner door; it was thrown open, and a figure appeared with a lamp—a tall, slim figure of a woman clothed in white from head to foot.

It was Mrs. Berry; and when Cutler and I saw her, we both ran away as fast as our legs could carry us.

Berry, at this, shrieked with a wild laughter. "Remember to-morrow, old boys," shouted he—"six o'clock;" and we were a quarter of a mile off when the gate closed, and the little mansion of the Avenue de Paris was once more quiet and dark.

The next afternoon, as we were playing at billiards, Cutler saw Mrs. Berry drive by in her carriage; and as soon as

rather a long rubber was over, I thought I would go and look for our poor friend, and so went down to the Pavilion. Every door was open, as the wont is in France, and I walked in unannounced, and saw this :—

He was playing a duet with her on the flute. She had been out but for half an hour, after not speaking all the morning; and having seen Cutler at the billiard-room window, and suspecting we might take advantage of her absence, she had suddenly returned home again, and had flung herself, weeping, into Frank's arms, and said she could not bear to leave him in anger. And so, after sitting for a little while sobbing on his knee, she had forgotten and forgiven everything!

The dear angel! I met poor Frank in Bond Street only yesterday; but he crossed over to the other side of the way. He had on goloshes, and is grown very fat and pale. He has shaved off his moustaches, and instead wears a respirator. He has taken his name off all his clubs, and lives very grimly in Baker Street. Well, ladies, no doubt you say he is right: and what are the odds, so long as *you* are happy?

DENNIS HAGGARTY'S WIFE.

THERE was an odious Irishwoman and her daughter who used to frequent the "Royal Hotel" at Leamington some years ago, and who went by the name of Mrs. Major Gam. Gam had been a distinguished officer in his Majesty's service, whom nothing but death and his own amiable wife could overcome. The widow mourned her husband in the most becoming bombazeen she could muster, and had at least half an inch of lampblack round the immense visiting-tickets which she left at the houses of the nobility and gentry her friends.

Some of us, I am sorry to say, used to call her Mrs. Major Gammon; for if the worthy widow had a propensity, it was to talk largely of herself and family (of her own family, for she held her husband's very cheap), and of the wonders of her paternal mansion, Molloyville, county of Mayo. She was of the Molloys of that county; and though I never heard of the family before, I have little doubt, from what Mrs. Major Gam stated, that they were the most ancient and illustrious family of that part of Ireland. I remember there came down to see his aunt a young fellow with huge red whiskers and tight nankeens, a green coat, and an awful breastpin, who, after two days' stay at the Spa, proposed marriage to Miss S——, or, in default, a duel with her father; and who drove a flash curricle with a bay and a grey, and who was presented with much pride by Mrs. Gam as Castlereagh Molloy of Molloyville. We all agreed that he was the most insufferable snob of the whole season, and were delighted when a bailiff came down in search of him.

Well, this is all I know personally of the Molloyville family; but at the house, if you met the Widow Gam, and talked on any subject in life, you were sure to hear of it. If

you asked her to have pease at dinner, she would say, "Oh, sir, after the pease at Molloyville, I really don't care for any others—do I, dearest Jemima? We always had a dish in the month of June, when my father gave his head gardener a guinea (we had three at Molloyville), and sent him with his compliments and a quart of pease to our neighbour, dear Lord Marrowfat. What a sweet place Marrowfat Park is! isn't it, Jemima?" If a carriage passed by the window, Mrs. Major Gammon would be sure to tell you that there were three carriages at Molloyville—"the barouche, the chawiot, and the covered cyar." In the same manner she would favour you with the number and names of the footmen of the establishment; and on a visit to Warwick Castle (for this bustling woman made one in every party of pleasure that was formed from the hotel), she gave us to understand that the great walk by the river was altogether inferior to the principal avenue of Molloyville Park. I should not have been able to tell so much about Mrs. Gam and her daughter, but that, between ourselves, I was particularly sweet upon a young lady at the time, whose papa lived at the "Royal," and was under the care of Dr. Jephson.

The Jemima appealed to by Mrs. Gam in the above sentence was, of course, her daughter, apostrophized by her mother, "Jemima, my soul's darling!" or, "Jemima, my blessed child!" or, "Jemima, my own love!" The sacrifices that Mrs. Gam had made for that daughter were, she said, astonishing. The money she had spent in masters upon her, the illnesses through which she had nursed her, the ineffable love the mother bore her, were only known to Heaven, Mrs. Gam said. They used to come into the room with their arms round each other's waists; at dinner, between the courses, the mother would sit with one hand locked in her daughter's; and if only two or three young men were present at the time, would be pretty sure to kiss her Jemima more than once during the time whilst the bohea was poured out.

As for Miss Gam, if she was not handsome, candour forbids me to say she was ugly. She was neither one nor t'other. She was a person who wore ringlets and a band round her forehead; she knew four songs, which became rather tedious at the end of a couple of months' acquaint-

ance; she had excessively bare shoulders; she inclined to wear numbers of cheap ornaments, rings, brooches, *ferronnières*, smelling-bottles, and was always, we thought, very smartly dressed: though old Mrs. Lynx hinted that her gowns and her mother's were turned over and over again, and that her eyes were almost put out by darning stockings.

These eyes Miss Gam had very large, though rather red and weak, and used to roll them about at every eligible unmarried man in the place. But though the widow subscribed to all the balls; though she hired a fly to go to the meet of the hounds; though she was constant at church, and Jemima sang louder than any person there except the clerk; and though, probably, any person who made her a happy husband would be invited down to enjoy the three footmen, gardeners, and carriages at Molloyville, yet no English gentleman was found sufficiently audacious to propose. Old Lynx used to say that the pair had been at Tunbridge, Harrogate, Brighton, Ramsgate, Cheltenham, for this eight years past; where they had met, it seemed, with no better fortune. Indeed, the widow looked rather high for her blessed child; and as she looked with the contempt which no small number of Irish people feel upon all persons who get their bread by labour or commerce, and as she was a person whose energetic manners, costume, and brogue were not much to the taste of quiet English country gentlemen, Jemima—sweet, spotless flower—still remained on her hands, a thought withered, perhaps, and seedy.

Now at this time the 120th Regiment was quartered at Weedon Barracks, and with the corps was a certain Assistant-Surgeon Haggarty, a large, lean, tough, raw-boned man, with big hands, knock-knees, and carroty whiskers, and, withal, as honest a creature as ever handled a lancet. Haggarty, as his name imports, was of the very same nation as Mrs. Gam; and, what is more, the honest fellow had some of the peculiarities which belonged to the widow, and bragged about his family almost as much as she did. I do not know of what particular part of Ireland they were kings, but monarchs they must have been, as have been the ancestors of so many thousand Hibernian families; but they had been men of no small consideration in Dublin, "where

my father," Haggarty said, "is as well known as King William's statue, and where he 'rowls his carriage, too,' let me tell ye."

Hence, Haggarty was called by the wags "Rowl the carriage," and several of them made inquiries of Mrs. Gam regarding him. "Mrs. Gam, when you used to go up from Molloyville to the Lord Lieutenant's balls, and had your town-house in Fitzwilliam Square, used you to meet the famous Doctor Haggarty in society?"

"Is it Surgeon Haggarty of Gloucester Street, ye mean? The black Papist! D'ye suppose that the Molloys would sit down to table with a creature of that sort?"

"Why, isn't he the most famous physician in Dublin, and doesn't he rowl his carriage there?"

"The horrid wretch! He keeps a shop, I tell ye, and sends his sons out with the medicine. He's got four of them off into the army—Ulick and Phil, and Terence and Denny; and now it's Charles that takes out the physic. But how should I know about these odious creatures? Their mother was a Burke, of Burke's Town, county Cavan, and brought Surgeon Haggarty two thousand pounds. She was a Protestant, and I am surprised how she could have taken up with a horrid, odious, Popish apothecary!"

From the extent of the widow's information, I am led to suppose that the inhabitants of Dublin are not less anxious about their neighbours than are the natives of English cities; and I think it is very probable that Mrs. Gam's account of the young Haggartys who carried out the medicine is perfectly correct, for a lad in the 120th made a caricature of Haggarty coming out of a chemist's shop with an oil-cloth basket under his arm, which set the worthy surgeon in such a fury that there would have been a duel between him and the ensign could the fiery doctor have had his way.

Now Dionysius Haggarty was of an exceedingly inflammable temperament, and it chanced that of all the invalids, the visitors, the young squires of Warwickshire, the young manufacturers from Birmingham, the young officers from the barracks—it chanced, unluckily for Miss Gam and himself, that he was the only individual who was in the least smitten by her personal charms. He was very tender and modest

about his love, however; for it must be owned that he respected Mrs. Gam hugely, and fully admitted, like a good simple fellow as he was, the superiority of that lady's birth and breeding to his own. How could he hope that he, a humble assistant-surgeon, with a thousand pounds his aunt Kitty left him for all his fortune—how could he hope that one of the race of Molloyville would ever condescend to marry him?

Inflamed, however, by love, and inspired by wine, one day, at a picnic at Kenilworth, Haggarty, whose love and raptures were the talk of the whole regiment, was induced by his waggish comrades to make a proposal in form.

"Are you aware, Mr. Haggarty, that you are speaking to a Molloy?" was all the reply majestic Mrs. Gam made when, according to the usual formula, the fluttering Jemima referred her suitor to "mamma." She left him with a look which was meant to crush the poor fellow to earth; she gathered up her cloak and bonnet, and precipitately called for her fly. She took care to tell every single soul in Leamington that the son of the odious Papist apothecary had had the audacity to propose for her daughter (indeed, a proposal, coming from whatever quarter it may, does no harm), and left Haggarty in a state of extreme depression and despair.

His down-heartedness, indeed, surprised most of his acquaintances in and out of the regiment; for the young lady was no beauty, and a doubtful fortune, and Dennis was a man outwardly of an unromantic turn, who seemed to have a great deal more liking for beef-steak and whisky-punch than for women, however fascinating.

But there is no doubt this shy, uncouth, rough fellow had a warmer and more faithful heart hid within him than many a dandy who is as handsome as Apollo. I, for my part, never can understand why a man falls in love, and heartily give him credit for so doing, never mind with what or whom. *That* I take to be a point quite as much beyond an individual's own control as the catching of the small-pox or the colour of his hair. To the surprise of all, Assistant-Surgeon Dionysius Haggarty was deeply and seriously in love; and I am told that one day he very nearly killed the before-mentioned young ensign with a carving-knife for venturing to

make a second caricature representing Lady Gammon and Jemima in a fantastical park, surrounded by three gardeners, three carriages, three footmen, and the covered cyar. He would have no joking concerning them. He became moody and quarrelsome of habit. He was for some time much more in the surgery and hospital than in the mess. He gave up the eating, for the most part, of those vast quantities of beef and pudding for which his stomach had used to afford such ample and swift accommodation; and when the cloth was drawn, instead of taking twelve tumblers, and singing Irish melodies as he used to do in a horrible cracked yelling voice, he would retire to his own apartment, or gloomily pace the barrack-yard, or madly whip and spur a grey mare he had on the road to Leamington, where his Jemima (although invisible for him) still dwelt.

The season at Leamington coming to a conclusion by the withdrawal of the young fellows who frequented that watering-place, the Widow Gam retired to her usual quarters for the other months of the year. Where these quarters were, I think we have no right to ask; for I believe she had quarrelled with her brother at Molloyville, and, besides, was a great deal too proud to be a burden on anybody.

Not only did the widow quit Leamington, but very soon afterwards the 120th received its marching orders, and left Weedon and Warwickshire. Haggarty's appetite was by this time partially restored; but his love was not altered, and his humour was still morose and gloomy. I am informed that at this period of his life he wrote some poems relative to his unhappy passion—a wild set of verses of several lengths, and in his handwriting, being discovered upon a sheet of paper in which a pitch-plaster was wrapped up, which Lieutenant and Adjutant Wheezer was compelled to put on for a cold.

Fancy, then, three years afterwards, the surprise of all Haggarty's acquaintances on reading in the public papers the following announcement:—

"Married, at Monkstown, on the 12th instant, Dionysius Haggarty, Esq., of H.M. 120th Foot, to Jemima Amelia Wilhelmina Molloy, daughter of the late Major Lancelot Gam, R.M., and granddaughter of the late, and niece of

the present, Burke Bodkin Blake Molloy, Esq., Molloyville, county Mayo."

"Has the course of true love at last begun to run smooth?" thought I, as I laid down the paper, and the old times, and the old leering, bragging widow, and the high shoulders of her daughter, and the jolly days with the 120th, and Dr. Jephson's one-horse chaise, and the Warwickshire hunt, and —and Louisa S——, but never mind *her*—came back to my mind. "Has that good-natured, simple fellow at last met with his reward? Well, if he has not to marry the mother-in-law, too, he may get on well enough."

Another year announced the retirement of Assistant-Surgeon Haggarty from the 120th, where he was replaced by Assistant-Surgeon Angus Rothsay Leech, a Scotchman, probably, with whom I have not the least acquaintance, and who has nothing whatever to do with this little history.

Still more years passed on, during which time I will not say that I kept a constant watch upon the fortunes of Mr. Haggarty and his lady; for, perhaps, if the truth were known, I never thought for a moment about them, until one day, being at Kingstown, near Dublin, dawdling on the beach and staring at the Hill of Howth, as most people at that watering-place do, I saw coming towards me a tall gaunt man, with a pair of bushy red whiskers, of which I thought I had seen the like in former years, and a face which could be no other than Haggarty's. It was Haggarty, ten years older than when we last met, and greatly more grim and thin. He had on one shoulder a young gentleman in a dirty tartan costume, and a face exceedingly like his own peeping from under a battered plume of black feathers, while with his other hand he was dragging a light green go-cart, in which reposed a female infant of some two years old. Both were roaring with great power of lungs.

As soon as Dennis saw me, his face lost the dull, puzzled expression which had seemed to characterize it. He dropped the pole of the go-cart from one hand and his son from the other, and came jumping forward to greet me with all his might, leaving his progeny roaring in the road.

"Bless my sowl," says he, "sure it's Fitz-Boodle! Fitz, don't you remember me? Dennis Haggarty of the 120th? Leamington, you know?—Molloy, my boy, hould your tongue and stop your screeching, and Jemima's, too; d'ye hear?—Well, it does good to sore eyes to see an old face. How fat you're grown, Fitz; and were ye ever in Ireland before? and a'n't ye delighted with it? Confess, now, isn't it beautiful?"

This question regarding the merits of their country, which I have remarked is put by most Irish persons, being answered in a satisfactory manner, and the shouts of the infants appeased from an apple-stall hard by, Dennis and I talked of old times; and I congratulated him on his marriage with the lovely girl whom we all admired, and hoped he had a fortune with her, and so forth. His appearance, however, did not bespeak a great fortune. He had an old grey hat, short old trousers, an old waistcoat with regimental buttons, and patched Blucher boots, such as are not usually sported by persons in easy life.

"Ah!" says he, with a sigh, in reply to my queries, "times are changed since them days, Fitz-Boodle. My wife's not what she was—the beautiful creature you knew her.—Molloy, my boy, run off in a hurry to your mamma, and tell her an English gentleman is coming home to dine;—for you'll dine with me, Fitz, in course?" And I agreed to partake of that meal; though Master Molloy altogether declined to obey his papa's orders with respect to announcing the stranger.

"Well, I must announce you myself," says Haggarty, with a smile. "Come, it's just dinner-time, and my little cottage is not a hundred yards off." Accordingly, we all marched in procession to Dennis's little cottage, which was one of a row and a half of one-storied houses, with little courtyards before them, and mostly with very fine names on the door-posts of each. "Surgeon Haggarty" was emblazoned on Dennis's gate, on a stained green copper-plate; and, not content with this, on the door-post above the bell was an oval with the inscription of "New Molloyville." The bell was broken, of course; the court, or garden path, was mouldy, weedy, seedy; there were some dirty rocks, by way of ornament, round a faded grass-plot in the centre; some clothes and rags

hanging out of most part of the windows of New Molloyville, the immediate entrance to which was by a battered scraper, under a broken trellis-work, up which a withered creeper declined any longer to climb.

"Small, but snug," says Haggarty. "I'll lead the way, Fitz. Put your hat on the flower-pot there, and turn to the left into the drawing-room." A fog of onions and turf-smoke filled the whole of the house, and gave signs that dinner was not far off. Far off? You could hear it frizzling in the kitchen, where the maid was also endeavouring to hush the crying of a third refractory child. But as we entered, all three of Haggarty's darlings were in full war.

"Is it you, Dennis?" cried a sharp raw voice, from a dark corner in the drawing-room to which we were introduced, and in which a dirty tablecloth was laid for dinner, some bottles of porter and a cold mutton-bone being laid out on a rickety grand piano hard by. "Ye're always late, Mr. Haggarty. Have you brought the whisky from Nowlan's? I'll go bail ye've not now."

"My dear, I've brought an old friend of yours and mine to take pot-luck with us to-day," said Dennis.

"When is he to come?" said the lady. At which speech I was rather surprised, for I stood before her.

"Here he is, Jemima, my love," answered Dennis, looking at me. "Mr. Fitz-Boodle; don't you remember him in Warwickshire, darling?"

"Mr. Fitz-Boodle! I am very glad to see him," said the lady, rising and curtsying with much cordiality.

Mrs. Haggarty was blind!

Mrs. Haggarty was not only blind, but it was evident that small-pox had been the cause of her loss of vision. Her eyes were bound with a bandage, her features were entirely swollen, scarred, and distorted by the horrible effects of the malady. She had been knitting in a corner when we entered, and was wrapped in a very dirty bedgown. Her voice to me was quite different to that in which she addressed her husband. She spoke to Haggarty in broad Irish: she addressed me in that most odious of all languages—Irish-English, endeavouring to the utmost to disguise her brogue, and to speak with the true dawdling *distingué* English air.

"Are you long in I-a-land?" said the poor creature in this accent. "You must faind it a sad ba'ba'ous place, Mr. Fitz-Boodle, I'm shu-ah! It was vary kaind of you to come upon us *en famille*, and accept a dinner *sans cérémonie*.—Mr. Haggarty, I hope you'll put the waine into aice; Mr. Fitz-Boodle must be melted with this hot weathah."

For some time she conducted the conversation in this polite strain, and I was obliged to say, in reply to a query of hers, that I did not find her the least altered, though I should never have recognized her but for this rencontre. She told Haggarty with a significant air to get the wine from the cellah, and whispered to me that he was his own butlah; and the poor fellow, taking the hint, scudded away into the town for a pound of veal cutlets and a couple of bottles of wine from the tavern.

"Will the childhren get their potatoes and butther here?" said a barefoot girl, with long black hair flowing over her face, which she thrust in at the door.

"Let them sup in the nursery, Elizabeth, and send—ah! Edwards to me."

"Is it cook you mane, ma'am?" said the girl.

"Send her at once!" shrieked the unfortunate woman; and the noise of frying presently ceasing, a hot woman made her appearance, wiping her brows with her apron, and asking, with an accent decidedly Hibernian, what the misthress wanted.

"Lead me up to my dressing-room, Edwards; I really am not fit to be seen in this dishabille by Mr. Fitz-Boodle."

"Fait' I can't!" says Edwards. "Sure the masther's out at the butcher's, and can't look to the kitchen-fire!"

"Nonsense, I must go!" cried Mrs. Haggarty; and so Edwards, putting on a resigned air, and giving her arm and face a further rub with her apron, held out her arm to Mrs. Dennis, and the pair went upstairs.

She left me to indulge my reflections for half an hour, at the end of which period she came downstairs dressed in an old yellow satin, with the poor shoulders exposed just as much as ever. She had mounted a tawdry cap, which Haggarty himself must have selected for her. She had all sorts of necklaces, bracelets, and earrings in gold, in garnets,

in mother-of-pearl, in ormolu. She brought in a furious savour of musk, which drove the odours of onions and turf-smoke before it; and she waved across her wretched, angular, mean, scarred features an old cambric handkerchief with a yellow lace border.

"And so you would have known me anywhere, Mr. Fitz-boodle?" said she, with a grin that was meant to be most fascinating. "I was sure you would; for though my dreadful illness deprived me of my sight, it is a mercy that it did not change my features or complexion at all!"

This mortification had been spared the unhappy woman; but I don't know whether, with all her vanity, her infernal pride, folly, and selfishness, it was charitable to leave her in her error.

Yet why correct her? There is a quality in certain people which is above all advice, exposure, or correction. Only let a man or woman have DULLNESS sufficient, and they need bow to no extant authority. A dullard recognizes no betters; a dullard can't see that he is in the wrong; a dullard has no scruples of conscience, no doubts of pleasing, or succeeding, or doing right—no qualms for other people's feelings, no respect but for the fool himself. How can you make a fool perceive that he is a fool? Such a personage can no more see his own folly than he can see his own ears. And the great quality of dullness is to be unalterably contented with itself. What myriads of souls are there of this admirable sort—selfish, stingy, ignorant, passionate, brutal; bad sons, mothers, fathers, never known to do kind actions!

To pause, however, in this disquisition which was carrying us far off Kingstown, New Molloyville, Ireland—nay, into the wide world wherever Dullness inhabits—let it be stated that Mrs. Haggarty, from my brief acquaintance with her and her mother, was of the order of persons just mentioned. There was an air of conscious merit about her, very hard to swallow along with the infamous dinner poor Dennis managed, after much delay, to get on the table. She did not fail to invite me to Molloyville, where she said her cousin would be charmed to see me; and she told me almost as many anecdotes about that place as her mother used to impart in former days. I observed, moreover, that Dennis cut her the

favourite pieces of the beef-steak, that she ate thereof with great gusto, and that she drank with similar eagerness of the various strong liquors at table. "We Irish ladies are all fond of a leetle glass of punch," she said, with a playful air; and Dennis mixed her a powerful tumbler of such violent grog as I myself could swallow only with some difficulty. She talked of her suffering a great deal, of her sacrifices, of the luxuries to which she had been accustomed before marriage—in a word, of a hundred of those themes on which some ladies are in the custom of enlarging when they wish to plague some husbands.

But honest Dennis, far from being angry at this perpetual, wearisome, impudent recurrence to her own superiority, rather encouraged the conversation than otherwise. It pleased him to hear his wife discourse about her merits and family splendours. He was so thoroughly beaten down and henpecked that he, as it were, gloried in his servitude, and fancied that his wife's magnificence reflected credit on himself. He looked towards me, who was half sick of the woman and her egotism, as if expecting me to exhibit the deepest sympathy, and flung me glances across the table as much as to say, "What a gifted creature my Jemima is, and what a fine fellow I am to be in possession of her!" When the children came down she scolded them, of course, and dismissed them abruptly (for which circumstance, perhaps, the writer of these pages was not in his heart very sorry); and, after having sat a preposterously long time, left us, asking whether we would have coffee there or in her boudoir.

"Oh! here, of course," said Dennis, with rather a troubled air; and in about ten minutes the lovely creature was led back to us again by "Edwards," and the coffee made its appearance. After coffee her husband begged her to let Mr. Fitz-Boodle hear her voice. "He longs for some of his old favourites."

"No! *do* you?" said she, and was led in triumph to the jingling old piano, and with a screechy, wiry voice sung those very abominable old ditties which I had heard her sing at Leamington ten years back.

Haggarty, as she sang, flung himself back in his chair delighted. Husbands always are, and with the same song—

one that they have heard when they were nineteen years old, probably: most Englishmen's tunes have that date, and it is rather affecting, I think, to hear an old gentleman of sixty or seventy quavering the old ditty that was fresh when *he* was fresh and in his prime. If he has a musical wife, depend on it he thinks her old songs of 1788 are better than any he has heard since—in fact he has heard *none* since. When the old couple are in high good-humour, the old gentleman will take the old lady round the waist, and say, "My dear, do sing me one of your own songs;" and she sits down and sings with her old voice, and, as she sings, the roses of her youth bloom again for a moment. Ranelagh resuscitates, and she is dancing a minuet in powder and a train.

This is another digression. It was occasioned by looking at poor Dennis's face while his wife was screeching (and, believe me, the former was the most pleasant occupation). Bottom tickled by the fairies could not have been in greater ecstasies. He thought the music was divine; and had further reason for exulting in it, which was, that his wife was always in a good-humour after singing, and never would sing but in that happy frame of mind. Dennis had hinted so much in our little colloquy during the ten minutes of his lady's absence in the "boudoir;" so, at the conclusion of each piece, we shouted "Bravo!" and clapped our hands like mad.

Such was my insight into the life of Surgeon Dionysius Haggarty and his wife; and I must have come upon him at a favourable moment too, for poor Dennis has spoken subsequently of our delightful evening at Kingstown, and evidently thinks to this day that his friend was fascinated by the entertainment there. His inward economy was as follows: he had his half-pay, a thousand pounds, about a hundred a year that his father left, and his wife had sixty pounds a year from the mother—which the mother, of course, never paid. He had no practice, for he was absorbed in attention to his Jemima and the children, whom he used to wash, to dress, to carry out, to walk, or to ride, as we have seen, and who could not have a servant, as their dear blind mother could never be left alone. Mrs. Haggarty, a great invalid, used to lie in bed till one, and have breakfast and hot luncheon

there. A fifth part of his income was spent in having her wheeled about in a chair, by which it was his duty to walk daily for an allotted number of hours. Dinner would ensue, and the amateur clergy, who abound in Ireland, and of whom Mrs. Haggarty was a great admirer, lauded her everywhere as a model of resignation and virtue, and praised beyond measure the admirable piety with which she bore her sufferings.

Well, every man to his taste. It did not certainly appear to me that *she* was the martyr of the family.

"The circumstances of my marriage with Jemima," Dennis said to me in some after conversations we had on this interesting subject, "were the most romantic and touching you can conceive. You saw what an impression the dear girl had made upon me when we were at Weedon; for from the first day I set eyes on her, and heard her sing her delightful song of 'Dark-eyed Maiden of Araby,' I felt, and said to Turniquet of ours that very night, that *she* was the dark-eyed maid of Araby for *me*—not that she was, you know, for she was born in Shropshire. But I felt that I had seen the woman who was to make me happy or miserable for life. You know how I proposed for her at Kenilworth, and how I was rejected, and how I almost shot myself in consequence —no, you don't know that, for I said nothing about it to any one; but I can tell you it was a very near thing, and a very lucky thing for me I didn't do it, for—would you believe it?—the dear girl was in love with me all the time."

"Was she really?" said I, who recollected that Miss Gam's love of those days showed itself in a very singular manner; but the fact is, when women are most in love they most disguise it.

"Over head and ears in love with poor Dennis," resumed that worthy fellow, "who'd ever have thought it? But I have it from the best authority, from her own mother, with whom I'm not over and above good friends now; but of this fact she assured me, and I'll tell you when and how.

"We were quartered at Cork three years after we were at Weedon, and it was our last year at home; and a great mercy that my dear girl spoke in time, or where should we have been *now?* Well, one day, marching home from parade, I

saw a lady seated at an open window by another who seemed an invalid; and the lady at the window, who was dressed in the profoundest mourning, cried out with a scream, 'Gracious heavens! it's Mr. Haggarty of the 120th.'

"'Sure I know that voice,' says I to Whiskerton.

"'It's a great mercy you don't know it a deal too well,' says he; 'it's Lady Gammon. She's on some husband-hunting scheme, depend on it, for that daughter of hers. She was at Bath last year on the same errand, and at Cheltenham the year before, where, Heaven bless you! she's as well known as the "Hen and Chickens."'

"'I'll thank you not to speak disrespectfully of Miss Jemima Gam,' said I to Whiskerton; 'she's of one of the first families in Ireland, and whoever says a word against a woman I once proposed for, insults me—do you understand?'

"'Well, marry her, if you like,' says Whiskerton, quite peevish; 'marry her, and be hanged!'

"Marry her! the very idea of it set my brain a-whirling, and made me a thousand times more mad than I am by nature.

"You may be sure I walked up the hill to the parade-ground that afternoon, and with a beating heart, too. I came to the widow's house. It was called 'New Molloyville,' as this is. Wherever she takes a house for six months, she calls it 'New Molloyville;' and has had one in Mallow, in Bandon, in Sligo, in Castlebar, in Fermoy, in Drogheda, and the deuce knows where besides. But the blinds were down, and though I thought I saw somebody behind 'em, no notice was taken of poor Denny Haggarty, and I paced up and down all mess-time in hopes of catching a glimpse of Jemima, but in vain. The next day I was on the ground again; I was just as much in love as ever, that's the fact. I'd never been in that way before, look you; and when once caught, I knew it was for life.

"There's no use in telling you how long I beat about the bush, but when I *did* get admittance to the house (it was through the means of young Castlereagh Molloy, whom you may remember at Leamington, and who was at Cork for the regatta, and used to dine at our mess, and had taken a mighty fancy to me)—when I *did* get into the house, I say, I rushed

in medias res at once. I couldn't keep myself quiet; my heart was too full.

"Oh, Fitz! I shall never forget the day—the moment I was inthrojuiced into the dthrawing-room" (as he began to be agitated, Dennis's brogue broke out with greater richness than ever; but though a stranger may catch, and repeat from memory, a few words, it is next to impossible for him to *keep up a conversation* in Irish, so that we had best give up all attempts to imitate Dennis). "When I saw old Mother Gam," said he, "my feelings overcame me all at once. I rowled down on the ground, sir, as if I'd been hit by a musket-ball. 'Dearest madam,' says I, 'I'll die if you don't give me Jemima.'

"'Heavens, Mr. Haggarty!' says she, 'how you seize me with surprise!—Castlereagh, my dear nephew, had you not better leave us?' and away he went, lighting a cigar, and leaving me still on the floor.

"'Rise, Mr. Haggarty,' continued the widow. 'I will not attempt to deny that this constancy towards my daughter is extremely affecting, however sudden your present appeal may be. I will not attempt to deny that, perhaps, Jemima may have a similar feeling; but, as I said, I never could give my daughter to a Catholic.'

"'I'm as good a Protestant as yourself, ma'am,' says I; 'my mother was an heiress, and we were all brought up her way.'

"'That makes the matter very different,' says she, turning up the whites of her eyes. 'How could I ever have reconciled it to my conscience to see my blessed child married to a Papist? How could I ever have taken him to Molloyville? Well, this obstacle being removed, *I* must put myself no longer in the way between two young people. *I* must sacrifice myself, as I always have when my darling girl was in question. You shall see her, the poor dear, lovely, gentle sufferer, and learn your fate from her own lips.'

"'The sufferer, ma'am,' says I; 'has Miss Gam been ill?'

"'What! haven't you heard?' cried the widow. 'Haven't you heard of the dreadful illness which so nearly carried her from me? For nine weeks, Mr. Haggarty, I watched her day and night without taking a wink of sleep—for nine weeks

she lay trembling between death and life; and I paid the doctor eighty-three guineas. She is restored now, but she is the wreck of the beautiful creature she was. Suffering, and, perhaps, *another disappointment*—but we won't mention that *now*—have so pulled her down. But I will leave you, and prepare my sweet girl for this strange, this entirely unexpected visit.'

"I won't tell you what took place between me and Jemima, to whom I was introduced as she sat in the darkened room, poor sufferer! nor describe to you with what a thrill of joy I seized (after groping about for it) her poor, emaciated hand. She did not withdraw it; I came out of that room an engaged man, sir; and *now* I was enabled to show her that I had always loved her sincerely, for there was my will made three years back in her favour—that night she refused me, as I told ye. I would have shot myself, but they'd have brought me in *non compos*, and my brother Mick would have contested the will; and so I determined to live, in order that she might benefit by my dying. I had but a thousand pounds then; since that my father has left me two more. I willed every shilling to her, as you may fancy, and settled it upon her when we married, as we did soon after. It was not for some time that I was allowed to see the poor girl's face, or indeed was aware of the horrid loss she had sustained. Fancy my agony, my dear fellow, when I saw that beautiful wreck!"

There was something not a little affecting to think, in the conduct of this brave fellow, that he never once, as he told his story, seemed to allude to the possibility of his declining to marry a woman who was not the same as the woman he loved, but that he was quite as faithful to her now as he had been when captivated by the poor, tawdry charms of the silly Miss of Leamington. It was hard that such a noble heart as this should be flung away upon yonder foul mass of greedy vanity. Was it hard, or not, that he should remain deceived in his obstinate humility, and continue to admire the selfish, silly being whom he had chosen to worship?

"I should have been appointed surgeon of the regiment," continued Dennis, "soon after, when it was ordered abroad to Jamaica, where it now is. But my wife would not hear of going, and said she would break her heart if she left her

mother. So I retired on half-pay, and took this cottage; and in case any practice should fall in my way—why, there is my name on the brass plate, and I'm ready for anything that comes. But the only case that ever *did* come was one day when I was driving my wife in the chaise; and another, one night, of a beggar with a broken head. My wife makes me a present of a baby every year, and we've no debts; and between you and me and the post, as long as my mother-in-law is out of the house, I'm as happy as I need be."

"What! you and the old lady don't get on well?" said I.

"I can't say we do; it's not in nature, you know," said Dennis, with a faint grin. "She comes into the house and turns it topsy-turvy. When she's here, I'm obliged to sleep in the scullery. She's never paid her daughter's income since the first year, though she brags about her sacrifices as if she had ruined herself for Jemima; and besides, when she's here, there's a whole clan of the Molloys, horse, foot, and dragoons, that are quartered upon us, and eat me out of house and home."

"And is Molloyville such a fine place as the widow described it?" asked I, laughing, and not a little curious.

"Oh, a mighty fine place entirely!" said Dennis. "There's the oak park of two hundred acres, the finest land ye ever saw, only they've cut all the wood down. The garden in the old Molloy's time, they say, was the finest ever seen in the west of Ireland; but they've taken all the glass to mend the house windows: and small blame to them either. There's a clear rent-roll of three and fifty hundred a year, only it's in the hand of receivers; besides other debts, on which there is no land security."

"Your cousin-in-law, Castlereagh Molloy, won't come into a large fortune?"

"Oh, he'll do very well," said Dennis. "As long as he can get credit, he's not the fellow to stint himself. Faith, I was fool enough to put my name to a bit of paper for him, and as they could not catch him in Mayo, they laid hold of me at Kingstown here. And there was a pretty-to-do. Didn't Mrs. Gam say I was ruining her family, that's all! I paid it by instalments (for all my money is settled on Jemima); and Castlereagh, who's an honourable fellow,

offered me any satisfaction in life. Anyhow, he couldn't do more than *that*."

"Of course not; and now you're friends?"

"Yes, and he and his aunt have had a tiff, too; and he abuses her properly, I warrant ye. He says that she carried about Jemima from place to place, and flung her at the head of every unmarried man in England a'most—my poor Jemima, and she all the while dying in love with me! As soon as she got over the small-pox—she took it at Fermoy: God bless her! I wish I'd been by to be her nurse-tender—as soon as she was rid of it, the old lady said to Castlereagh, 'Castlereagh, go to the bar'cks, and find out in the Army List where the 120th is.' Off she came to Cork hot foot. It appears that while she was ill, Jemima's love for me showed itself in such a violent way that her mother was overcome, and promised that, should the dear child recover, she would try and bring us together. Castlereagh says she would have gone after us to Jamaica."

"I have no doubt she would," said I.

"Could you have a stronger proof of love than that?" cried Dennis. "My dear girl's illness and frightful blindness have, of course, injured her health and her temper. She cannot in her position look to the children, you know, and so they come under my charge for the most part; and her temper is unequal, certainly. But you see what a sensitive, refined, elegant creature she is, and may fancy that she's often put out by a rough fellow like me."

Here Dennis left me, saying it was time to go and walk out the children; and I think his story has matter of some wholesome reflection in it for bachelors who are about to change their condition, or may console some who are mourning their celibacy. Marry, gentlemen, if you like; leave your comfortable dinner at the club for cold mutton and curl-papers at your home; give up your books or pleasures, and take to yourselves wives and children; but think well on what you do first, as I have no doubt you will after this advice and example. Advice is always useful in matters of love; men always take it; they always follow other people's opinions, not their own; they always profit by example. When they see a pretty woman, and feel the

delicious madness of love coming over them, they always stop to calculate her temper, her money, their own money, or suitableness for the married life.....Ha, ha, ha! Let us fool in this way no more. I have been in love forty-three times with all ranks and conditions of women, and would have married every time if they would have let me. How many wives had King Solomon, the wisest of men? And is not that story a warning to us that Love is master of the wisest? It is only fools who defy him.

I must come, however, to the last, and perhaps the saddest, part of poor Denny Haggarty's history. I met him once more, and in such a condition as made me determine to write this history.

In the month of June last I happened to be at Richmond, a delightful little place of retreat; and there, sunning himself upon the terrace, was my old friend of the 120th. He looked older, thinner, poorer, and more wretched than I had ever seen him. "What! you have given up Kingstown?" said I, shaking him by the hand.

"Yes," says he.

"And is my lady and your family here at Richmond?"

"No," says he, with a sad shake of the head, and the poor fellow's hollow eyes filled with tears.

"Good heavens, Denny! what's the matter?" said I. He was squeezing my hand like a vice as I spoke.

"They've LEFT me!" he burst out with a dreadful shout of passionate grief—a horrible scream which seemed to be wrenched out of his heart. "Left me!" said he, sinking down on a seat, and clenching his great fists, and shaking his lean arms wildly. "I'm a wise man now, Mr. Fitz-Boodle. Jemima has gone away from me; and yet you know how I loved her, and how happy we were! I've got nobody now; but I'll die soon, that's one comfort, and to think it's she that'll kill me after all!"

The story, which he told me with a wild and furious lamentation such as is not known among men of our cooler country, and such as I don't like now to recall, was a very simple one. The mother-in-law had taken possession of the house, and had driven him from it. His property at his marriage was settled on his wife. She had never loved him,

and told him this secret at last, and drove him out of doors with her selfish scorn and ill-temper. The boy had died; the girls were better, he said, brought up among the Molloys than they could be with him; and so he was quite alone in the world, and was living, or rather dying, on forty pounds a year.

His troubles are very likely over by this time. The two fools who caused his misery will never read this history of him—*they* never read godless stories in magazines; and I wish, honest reader, that you and I went to church as much as they do. These people are not wicked *because* of their religious observances, but *in spite* of them. They are too dull to understand humility, too blind to see a tender and simple heart under a rough ungainly bosom. They are sure that all their conduct towards my poor friend here has been perfectly righteous, and that they have given proofs of the most Christian virtue. Haggarty's wife is considered by her friends as a martyr to a savage husband, and her mother is the angel that has come to rescue her. All they did was to cheat him and desert him. And safe in that wonderful self-complacency with which the fools of this earth are endowed, they have not a single pang of conscience for their villainy towards him, and consider their heartlessness as a proof and consequence of their spotless piety and virtue.

THE BEDFORD-ROW CONSPIRACY

THE BEDFORD-ROW CONSPIRACY.*

CHAPTER I.

OF THE LOVES OF MR. PERKINS AND MISS GORGON, AND OF THE TWO GREAT FACTIONS IN THE TOWN OF OLD-BOROUGH.

"MY dear John," cried Lucy, with a very wise look indeed, "it must and shall be so. As for Doughty Street, with our means, a house is out of the question. We must keep three servants, and Aunt Biggs says the taxes are one-and-twenty pounds a year."

"I have seen a sweet place at Chelsea," remarked John: "Paradise Row, No. 17,—garden—greenhouse—fifty pounds a year—omnibus to town within a mile."

"What! that I may be left alone all day, and you spend a fortune in driving backward and forward in those horrid breakneck cabs? My darling, I should die there—die of fright, I know I should. Did you not say yourself that the road was not as yet lighted, and that the place swarmed with public-houses and dreadful tipsy Irish bricklayers? Would you kill me, John?"

"My da—arling," said John, with tremendous fondness, clutching Miss Lucy suddenly round the waist, and rapping the hand of that young person violently against his waistcoat —"my da—arling, don't say such things, even in a joke. If

* A story of Charles de Bernard furnished the plot of "The Bedford-Row Conspiracy."

I objected to the chambers, it is only because you, my love, with your birth and connections, ought to have a house of your own. The chambers are quite large enough, and certainly quite good enough for me." And so, after some more sweet parley on the part of these young people, it was agreed that they should take up their abode, when married, in a part of the house number one hundred and something Bedford Row.

It will be necessary to explain to the reader that John was no other than John Perkins, Esq., of the Middle Temple, barrister-at-law, and that Miss Lucy was the daughter of the late Captain Gorgon, and Marianne Biggs, his wife. The Captain, being of noble connections, younger son of a baronet, cousin to Lord X——, and related to the Y—— family, had angered all his relatives by marrying a very silly, pretty young woman, who kept a ladies' school at Canterbury. She had six hundred pounds to her fortune, which the Captain laid out in the purchase of a sweet travelling carriage and dressing-case for himself; and going abroad with his lady, spent several years in the principal prisons of Europe, in one of which he died. His wife and daughter were meantime supported by the contributions of Mrs. Jemima Biggs, who still kept the ladies' school.

At last a dear old relative—such a one as one reads of in romances—died, and left seven thousand pounds apiece to the two sisters; whereupon the elder gave up schooling and retired to London; and the younger managed to live with some comfort and decency at Brussels, upon two hundred and ten pounds per annum. Mrs. Gorgon never touched a shilling of her capital, for the very good reason that it was placed entirely out of her reach; so that, when she died, her daughter found herself in possession of a sum of money that is not always to be met with in this world.

Her aunt the baronet's lady, and her aunt the ex-schoolmistress, both wrote very pressing invitations to her, and she resided with each for six months after her arrival in England. Now, for a second time, she had come to Mrs. Biggs, Caroline Place, Mecklenburgh Square. It was under the roof of that respectable old lady that John Perkins, Esq., being invited to take tea, wooed and won Miss Gorgon.

Having thus described the circumstances of Miss Gorgon's life, let us pass for a moment from that young lady, and lift up the veil of mystery which envelops the deeds and character of Perkins.

Perkins, too, was an orphan; and he and his Lucy, of summer evenings, when Sol descending lingered fondly yet about the minarets of the Foundling, and gilded the grass-plots of Mecklenburgh Square—Perkins, I say, and Lucy, would often sit together in the summer-house of that pleasure-ground, and muse upon the strange coincidences of their life. Lucy was motherless and fatherless; so, too, was Perkins. If Perkins was brotherless and sisterless, was not Lucy likewise an only child? Perkins was twenty-three: his age and Lucy's united, amounted to forty-six; and it was to be remarked, as a fact still more extraordinary, that while Lucy's relatives were *aunts*, John's were *uncles*. Mysterious spirit of love! let us treat thee with respect, and whisper not too many of thy secrets. The fact is, John and Lucy were a pair of fools (as every young couple *ought* to be who have hearts that are worth a farthing), and were ready to find coincidences, sympathies, hidden gushes of feeling, mystic unions of the soul, and what not, in every single circumstance that occurred from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, and in the intervals. Bedford Row, where Perkins lived, is not very far from Mecklenburgh Square; and John used to say that he felt a comfort that his house and Lucy's were served by the same muffin-man.

Further comment is needless. A more honest, simple, clever, warm-hearted, soft, whimsical, romantical, high-spirited young fellow than John Perkins did not exist. When his father, Dr. Perkins, died, this, his only son, was placed under the care of John Perkins, Esq., of the house of Perkins, Scully, and Perkins, those celebrated attorneys in the trading town of Oldborough, which the second partner, William Pitt Scully, Esq., represented in Parliament and in London.

All John's fortune was the house in Bedford Row, which, at his father's death, was let out into chambers, and brought in a clear hundred a year. Under his uncle's roof at Oldborough, where he lived with thirteen red-haired male and female cousins, he was only charged fifty pounds for board,

clothes, and pocket-money, and the remainder of his rents was carefully put by for him until his majority. When he approached that period—when he came to belong to two spouting-clubs at Oldborough, among the young merchants and lawyers' clerks—to blow the flute nicely, and play a good game at billiards—to have written one or two smart things in the *Oldborough Sentinel*—to be fond of smoking (in which act he was discovered by his fainting aunt at three o'clock one morning),—in one word, when John Perkins arrived at manhood, he discovered that he was quite unfit to be an attorney, that he detested all the ways of his uncle's stern, dull, vulgar, regular, red-headed family, and he vowed that he would go to London and make his fortune. Thither he went, his aunt and cousins, who were all "serious," vowing that he was a lost boy; and when his history opens, John had been two years in the metropolis, inhabiting his own garrets; and a very nice compact set of apartments, looking into the back garden, at this moment falling vacant, the prudent Lucy Gorgon had visited them, and vowed that she and her John should there commence housekeeping.

All these explanations are tedious, but necessary; and furthermore, it must be said, that as John's uncle's partner was the Liberal member for Oldborough, so Lucy's uncle was its Ministerial representative.

This gentleman, the brother of the deceased Captain Gorgon, lived at the paternal mansion of Gorgon Castle, and rejoiced in the name and title of Sir George Grimsby Gorgon. He, too, like his younger brother, had married a lady beneath his own rank in life; having espoused the daughter and heiress of Mr. Hicks, the great brewer at Oldborough, who held numerous mortgages on the Gorgon property, all of which he yielded up, together with his daughter Juliana, to the care of the baronet.

What Lady Gorgon was in character, this history will show. In person, if she may be compared to any vulgar animal, one of her father's heavy, healthy, broad-flanked, Roman-nosed, white dray horses might, to the poetic mind, appear to resemble her. At twenty she was a splendid creature, and though not at her full growth, yet remarkable for strength and sinew; at forty-five she was as fine a woman as any in

his Majesty's dominions. Five feet seven in height, thirteen stone, her own teeth and hair, she looked as if she were the mother of a regiment of Grenadier Guards. She had three daughters of her own size; and at length, ten years after the birth of the last of the young ladies, a son—one son—George Augustus Frederick Grimsby Gorgon, the godson of a royal duke, whose steady officer-in-waiting Sir George had been for many years.

It is needless to say, after entering so largely into a description of Lady Gorgon, that her husband was a little shrivelled, wizen-faced creature, eight inches shorter than her ladyship. This is the way of the world, as every single reader of this book must have remarked; for frolic, love delights to join giants and pigmies of different sexes in the bonds of matrimony. When you saw her ladyship, in flame-coloured satin and gorgeous toque and feathers, entering the drawing-room, as footmen along the stairs shouted melodiously, "Sir George and Lady Gorgon," you beheld in her company a small withered old gentleman, with powder and large royal household buttons, who tripped at her elbow as a little weak-legged colt does at the side of a stout mare.

The little General had been present at about a hundred and twenty pitched battles on Hounslow Heath and Wormwood Scrubs, but had never drawn his sword against an enemy. As might be expected, therefore, his talk and *tenue* were outrageously military. He had the whole Army List by heart—that is, as far as the field officers: all below them he scorned. A bugle at Gorgon Castle always sounded at breakfast and dinner; a gun announced sunset. He clung to his pigtail for many years after the army had forsaken that ornament, and could never be brought to think much of the Peninsular men for giving it up. When he spoke of the Duke, he used to call him "*My Lord Wellington—I recollect him as Captain Wesley.*" He swore fearfully in conversation, was most regular at church, and regularly read to his family and domestics the morning and evening prayer; he bullied his daughters, *seemed* to bully his wife, who led him whither she chose; gave grand entertainments, and never asked a friend by chance; had splendid liveries, and starved his people; and was as dull, stingy, pompous, in-

solent, cringing, ill-tempered a little creature as ever was known.

With such qualities, you may fancy that he was generally admired in society and by his country. So he was; and I never knew a man so endowed whose way through life was not safe—who had fewer pangs of conscience—more positive enjoyments—more respect shown to him—more favours granted to him, than such a one as my friend the General.

Her ladyship was just suited to him, and they did in reality admire each other hugely. Previously to her marriage with the baronet, many love-passages had passed between her and William Pitt Scully, Esq., the attorney; and there was especially one story *à propos* of certain syllabubs and Sally-Lunn cakes, which seemed to show that matters had gone very far. Be this as it may, no sooner did the General (Major Gorgon he was then) cast an eye on her than Scully's five years' fabric of love was instantly dashed to the ground. She cut him pitilessly, cut Sally Scully, his sister, her dearest friend and confidante, and bestowed her big person upon the little aide-de-camp at the end of a fortnight's wooing. In the course of time their mutual fathers died; the Gorgon estates were unencumbered. Patron of both the seats in the borough of Oldborough, and occupant of one, Sir George Grimsby Gorgon, Baronet, was a personage of no small importance.

He was, it scarcely need be said, a Tory; and this was the reason why William Pitt Scully, Esq., of the firm of Perkins and Scully, deserted those principles in which he had been bred and christened; deserted that church which he had frequented, for he could not bear to see Sir George and my lady flaunting in their grand pew;—deserted, I say, the church, adopted the conventicle, and became one of the most zealous and eloquent supporters that Freedom has known in our time. Scully, of the house of Scully and Perkins, was a dangerous enemy. In five years from that marriage, which snatched from the jilted solicitor his heart's young affections, Sir George Gorgon found that he must actually spend seven hundred pounds to keep his two seats. At the next election, a Liberal was set up against his man, and actually ran him hard; and finally, at the end of eighteen years, the rejected

Scully—the mean attorney—was actually the *first* Member for Oldborough, Sir George Grimsby Gorgon, Baronet, being only the second!

The agony of that day cannot be imagined—the dreadful curses of Sir George, who saw fifteen hundred a year robbed from under his very nose—the religious resignation of my lady—the hideous window-smashing that took place at the "Gorgon Arms," and the discomfiture of the pelted Mayor and Corporation. The very next Sunday, Scully was reconciled to the church (or attended it in the morning, and the meeting twice in the afternoon), and as Doctor Snorter uttered the prayer for the High Court of Parliament, his eye—the eye of his whole party—turned towards Lady Gorgon and Sir George in a most unholy triumph. Sir George (who always stood during prayers, like a military man) fairly sank down among the hassocks, and Lady Gorgon was heard to sob as audibly as ever did little beadle-belaboured urchin.

Scully, when at Oldborough, came from that day forth to church. "What," said he, "was it to him? Were we not all brethren?" Old Perkins, however, kept religiously to the Squaretoes congregation. In fact, to tell the truth, this subject had been debated between the partners, who saw the advantage of courting both the Establishment and the Dissenters—a manœuvre which, I need not say, is repeated in almost every country town in England, where a solicitor's house has this kind of power and connection.

Three months after this election came the races at Oldborough, and the race-ball. Gorgon was so infuriated by his defeat that he gave "the Gorgon cup and cover"—a matter of fifteen pounds. Scully, "although anxious," as he wrote from town, "anxious beyond measure to preserve the breed of horses for which our beloved country has ever been famous, could attend no such sports as these, which but too often degenerated into vice." It was voted a shabby excuse. Lady Gorgon was radiant in her barouche and four, and gladly became the patroness of the ball that was to ensue, and which all the gentry and townspeople, Tory and Whig, were in the custom of attending. The ball took place on the last day of the races. On that day, the walls of the market-house, the principal public buildings, and the "Gor-

gon Arms Hotel" itself, were plastered with the following:—

"LETTER FROM OUR DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE, WILLIAM P. SCULLY, ESQ., ETC., ETC.

"HOUSE OF COMMONS, *June* 1, 18—.

"MY DEAR HEELTAP,—You know my opinion about horse-racing; and though I blame neither you nor any brother Englishman who enjoys that manly sport, you will, I am sure, appreciate the conscientious motives which induce me not to appear among my friends and constituents on the festival of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th instant. If *I*, however, cannot allow my name to appear among your list of stewards, *one* at least of the representatives of Oldborough has no such scruples. Sir George Gorgon is among you; and though I differ from that honourable Baronet on more than *one vital point*, I am glad to think that he is with you. A gentleman, a soldier, a man of property in the county, how can he be better employed than in forwarding the county's amusements, and in forwarding the happiness of all?

"Had I no such scruples as those to which I have just alluded, I must still have refrained from coming among you. Your great Oldborough common-drainage and enclosure bill comes on to-morrow, and I shall be *at my post.* I am sure, if Sir George Gorgon were here, he and I should on this occasion vote side by side, and that party strife would be forgotten in the object of our common interest—*our dear native town.*

"There is, however, another occasion at hand, in which I shall be proud to meet him. Your ball is on the night of the 6th. Party forgotten—brotherly union—innocent mirth—beauty, *our dear town's beauty*, our daughters in the joy of their expanding loveliness, our matrons in the exquisite contemplation of their children's bliss,—can you, can I, can Whig or Tory, can any Briton be indifferent to a scene like this, or refuse to join in this heart-stirring festival? If there *be* such, let them pardon me. I, for one, my dear Heeltap, will be among you on Friday night,—ay, and hereby invite all pretty Tory Misses, who are in want of a partner.

"I am here in the very midst of good things, you know,

and we old folks like *a supper* after a dance. Please to accept a brace of bucks and a turtle, which come herewith. My worthy colleague, who was so liberal last year of his soup to the poor, will not, I trust, refuse to taste a little of Alderman Birch's—'tis offered on my part with hearty good will. Hey for the 6th, and *vive la joie!*

"Ever, my dear Heeltap, your faithful

"W. PITT SCULLY."

"P.S.—Of course this letter is *strictly private.* Say that the venison, etc., came from a *well-wisher to Oldborough.*"

This amazing letter was published, in defiance of Mr. Scully's injunctions, by the enthusiastic Heeltap, who said bluntly, in a preface, "that he saw no reason why Mr. Scully should be ashamed of his action, and he, for his part, was glad to let all friends at Oldborough know of it."

The allusion about the Gorgon soup was killing: thirteen paupers in Oldborough had, it was confidently asserted, died of it. Lady Gorgon, on the reading of this letter, was struck completely dumb; Sir George Gorgon was wild. Ten dozen of champagne was he obliged to send down to the "Gorgon Arms," to be added to the festival. He would have stayed away if he could, but he dared not.

At nine o'clock, he in general's uniform, his wife in blue satin and diamonds, his daughters in blue crape and white roses, his niece, Lucy Gorgon, in white muslin, his son, George Augustus Frederick Grimsby Gorgon, in a blue velvet jacket, sugar-loaf buttons, and nankeens, entered the north door of the ball-room, to much cheering, and the sound of "God save the King."

At that very same moment, and from the south door, issued William Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P., and his staff. Mr. Scully had a brand-new blue coat and brass buttons, buff waistcoat, white kerseymere tights, pumps with large rosettes, and pink silk stockings.

"This wool," said he to a friend, "was grown on Oldborough sheep, this cloth was spun in Oldborough looms, these buttons were cast in an Oldborough manufactory, these shoes were made by an Oldborough tradesman, this

heart first beat in Oldborough town, and pray Heaven may be buried there."

Could anything resist a man like this? John Perkins, who had come down as one of Scully's aides-de-camp, in a fit of generous enthusiasm, leaped on a whist-table, flung up a pocket-handkerchief, and shrieked, "SCULLY FOR EVER!"

Heeltap, who was generally drunk, fairly burst into tears, and the grave tradesmen and Whig gentry, who had dined with the Member at his inn, and accompanied him thence to the "Gorgon Arms," lifted their deep voices and shouted, "Hear!" "Good!" "Bravo!" "Noble!" "Scully for ever!" "God bless him!" and "Hurrah!"

The scene was tumultuously affecting; and when young Perkins sprang down from the table and came blushing up to the Member, that gentleman said, "Thank you, Jack! *thank* you, my boy! THANK you!" in a way which made Perkins think that his supreme cup of bliss was quaffed—that he had but to die, for that life had no other such joy in store for him. Scully was Perkins's Napoleon: he yielded himself up to the attorney, body and soul.

Whilst this scene was going on under one chandelier of the ball-room, beneath the other scarlet little General Gorgon, sumptuous Lady Gorgon, the daughters and niece Gorgons, were standing surrounded by their Tory court, who affected to sneer and titter at the Whig demonstrations which were taking place.

"What a hawwid thmell of whithkey!" lisped Cornet Fitch, of the Dragoons, to Miss Lucy, confidentially. "And thethe are what they call Whigth, are they? He! he!"

"They are drunk, —— me—drunk by ——!" said the General to the Mayor.

"*Which* is Scully?" said Lady Gorgon, lifting her glass gravely (she was at that very moment thinking of the syllabubs). "Is it that tipsy man in the green coat, or that vulgar creature in the blue one?"

"Law, my lady," said the Mayoress, "have you forgotten him? Why, that's him in blue and buff."

"And a monthous fine man, too," said Cornet Fitch. "I wish we had him in our twoop. He'th thix feet thwee, if he'th an inch—ain't he, Genewal?"

No reply.

"And heavens! mamma," shrieked the three Gorgons in a breath; "see, one creature is on the whist-table. Oh, the wretch!"

"I'm sure he's very good-looking," said Lucy simply.

Lady Gorgon darted at her an angry look, and was about to say something very contemptuous, when, at that instant, John Perkins's shout taking effect, Master George Augustus Frederick Grimsby Gorgon, not knowing better, incontinently raised a small shout on his side.

"Hear! good! bravo!" exclaimed he; "Scully for ever! Hurra-a-a-ay!" and fell skipping about like the Whigs opposite.

"Silence, you brute you!" groaned Lady Gorgon, and seizing him by the shirt-frill and coat-collar, carried him away to his nurse, who, with many other maids of the Whig and Tory parties, stood giggling and peeping at the landing-place.

Fancy how all these small incidents augmented the heap of Lady Gorgon's anger and injuries. She was a dull, phlegmatic woman for the most part, and contented herself generally with merely despising her neighbours; but oh! what a fine active hatred raged in her bosom for victorious Scully! At this moment Mr. Perkins had finished shaking hands with his Napoleon. Napoleon seemed bent upon some tremendous enterprise. He was looking at Lady Gorgon very hard.

"She's a fine woman," said Scully thoughtfully; he was still holding the hand of Perkins. And then, after a pause, "Gad! I think I'll try."

"Try what, sir?"

"She's a *deuced* fine woman!" burst out again the tender solicitor. "I *will* go. Springer, tell the fiddlers to strike up."

Springer scuttled across the room, and gave the leader of the band a knowing nod. Suddenly, "God save the King" ceased, and "Sir Roger de Coverley" began. The rival forces eyed each other; Mr. Scully, accompanied by his friend, came forward, looking very red, and fumbling two large kid gloves.

"*He's going to ask me to dance*," hissed out Lady Gorgon, with a dreadful intuition, and she drew back behind her lord.

"D—— it, Madam, *then dance* with him!" said the General. "Don't you see that the scoundrel is carrying it all his own way! —— him! and —— him! and —— him!" (All of which dashes the reader may fill up with oaths of such strength as may be requisite.)

"General!" cried Lady Gorgon, but could say no more. Scully was before her.

"Madam!" exclaimed the Liberal Member for Oldborough, "in a moment like this—I say—that is—that on the present occasion—your ladyship—unaccustomed as I am —pooh, psha—*will* your ladyship give me the distinguished honour and pleasure of going down the country-dance with your ladyship?"

An immense heave of her ladyship's ample chest was perceptible. Yards of blond lace, which might be compared to a foam of the sea, were agitated at the same moment, and by the same mighty emotion. The river of diamonds which flowed round her ladyship's neck seemed to swell and to shine more than ever. The tall plumes on her ambrosial head bowed down beneath the storm. In other words, Lady Gorgon, in a furious rage, which she was compelled to restrain, trembled, drew up, and bowing majestically, said,—

"Sir, I shall have much pleasure." With this, she extended her hand. Scully, trembling, thrust forward one of his huge kid gloves, and led her to the head of the country-dance. John Perkins—who I presume had been drinking pretty freely, so as to have forgotten his ordinary bashfulness—looked at the three Gorgons in blue, then at the pretty smiling one in white, and stepping up to her, without the smallest hesitation, asked her if she would dance with him. The young lady smilingly agreed. The great example of Scully and Lady Gorgon was followed by all dancing men and women. Political enmities were forgotten. Whig voters invited Tory voters' wives to the dance. The daughters of Reform accepted the hands of the sons of Conservatism. The reconciliation of the Romans and Sabines was not more touching than this sweet fusion. Whack — whack! Mr. Springer clapped his hands; and the fiddlers adroitly obeying the cheerful signal, began playing "Sir Roger de Coverley" louder than ever.

I do not know by what extraordinary charm (*nescio quâ præter solitum, etc.*), but young Perkins, who all his life had hated country-dances, was delighted with this one, and skipped and laughed, poussetting, crossing, down-the-middling, with his merry little partner, till every one of the bettermost sort of the thirty-nine couples had dropped panting away, and till the youngest Miss Gorgon, coming up to his partner, said, in a loud, hissing, scornful whisper, "Lucy, mamma thinks you have danced quite enough with this—this person." And Lucy, blushing, starting back, and looking at Perkins in a very melancholy way, made him a little curtsy, and went off to the Gorgonian party with her cousin. Perkins was too frightened to lead her back to her place—too frightened at first, and then too angry. "Person!" said he. His soul swelled with a desperate republicanism; he went back to his patron more of a radical than ever.

He found that gentleman in the solitary tea-room, pacing up and down before the observant landlady and handmaidens of the "Gorgon Arms," wiping his brows, gnawing his fingers, his ears looming over his stiff white shirt-collar as red as fire. Once more the great man seized John Perkins's hand as the latter came up.

"D—— the aristocrats!" roared the ex-follower of Square-toes.

"And so say I; but what's the matter, sir?"

"What's the matter? Why, that woman—that infernal haughty, strait-laced, cold-blooded brewer's daughter! I loved that woman, sir—I *kissed* that woman, sir, twenty years ago; we were all but engaged, sir; we've walked for hours and hours, sir—us and the governess; I've got a lock of her hair, sir, among my papers now; and to-night—would you believe it?—as soon as she got to the bottom of the set, away she went—not one word would she speak to me all the way down; and when I wanted to lead her to her place, and asked her if she would have a glass of negus, 'Sir,' says she, 'I have done my duty; I bear no malice; but I consider you a traitor to Sir George Gorgon's family—a traitor and an upstart! I consider your speaking to me as a piece of insolent vulgarity, and beg you will leave me to myself!' There's her speech, sir. Twenty people heard it, and all of her Tory set too.

I'll tell you what, Jack: at the next election I'll put *you* up. Oh, that woman! that woman!—and to think that I love her still!" Here Mr. Scully paused, and fiercely consoled himself by swallowing three cups of Mrs. Rincer's green tea.

The fact is, that Lady Gorgon's passion had completely got the better of her reason. Her ladyship was naturally cold and artificially extremely squeamish; and when this great red-faced enemy of hers looked tenderly at her through his red little eyes, and squeezed her hand, and attempted to renew old acquaintance, she felt such an intolerable disgust at his triumph, at his familiarity, and at the remembrance of her own former liking for him, that she gave utterance to the speech above correctly reported. The Tories were delighted with her spirit, and Cornet Fitch, with much glee, told the story to the General; but that officer, who was at whist with some of his friends, flung down his cards, and coming up to his lady, said briefly,—

"Madam, you are a fool!"

"I will *not* stay here to be bearded by that disgusting man!—Mr. Fitch, call my people.—Henrietta, bring Miss Lucy from that linendraper with whom she is dancing.—I will not stay, General, once for all."

Henrietta ran—she hated her cousin; Cornet Fitch was departing. "Stop, Fitch," said Sir George, seizing him by the arm.—"You are a fool, Lady Gorgon," said he, "and I repeat it—a —— fool! This fellow Scully is carrying all before him; he has talked with everybody, laughed with everybody; and you, with your infernal airs (a brewer's daughter, by ——), must sit like a queen and not speak to a soul! You've lost me one seat of my borough, with your infernal pride—fifteen hundred a year, by Jove!—and you think you will bully me out of another. No, madam, you *shall* stay, and stay supper too; and the girls shall dance with every cursed chimney-sweep and butcher in the room; they shall—confound me!"

Her ladyship saw that it was necessary to submit, and Mr. Springer, the master of the ceremonies, was called, and requested to point out some eligible partners for the young ladies. One went off with a Whig auctioneer; another

figured in a quadrille with a very Liberal apothecary; and the third, Miss Henrietta, remained.

"Hallo you, sir!" roared the little General to John Perkins, who was passing by. John turned round and faced him.

"You were dancing with my niece just now: show us your skill now, and dance with one of my daughters.—Stand up, Miss Henrietta Gorgon—Mr. What's-your-name?"

"My name," said John, with marked and majestic emphasis, "is PERKINS." And he looked towards Lucy, who dared not look again.

"Miss Gorgon—Mr. Perkins. There now; go and dance."

"Mr. Perkins regrets, Madam," said John, making a bow to Miss Henrietta, "that he is not able to dance this evening. I am this moment obliged to look to the supper; but you will find, no doubt, some other PERSON who will have much pleasure."

"Go to ——, sir!" screamed the General, starting up and shaking his cane.

"Calm yourself, dearest George," said Lady Gorgon, clinging fondly to him. Fitch twiddled his moustaches. Miss Henrietta Gorgon stared with open mouth. The silks of the surrounding dowagers rustled—the countenances of all looked grave.

"I will follow you, sir, wherever you please; and you may hear of me whenever you like," said Mr. Perkins, bowing and retiring. He heard little Lucy sobbing in a corner. He was lost at once—lost in love; he felt as if he could combat fifty generals. He never was so happy in his life.

The supper came; but as that meal cost five shillings a head, General Gorgon dismissed the four spinsters of his family homewards in the carriage, and so saved himself a pound. This added to Jack Perkins's wrath; he had hoped to have seen Miss Lucy once more. He was a steward, and, in the General's teeth, would have done his duty. He was thinking how he would have helped her to the most delicate chicken-wings and blanc-manges, how he *would* have made her take champagne. Under the noses of indignant aunt and uncle, what glorious fun it would have been!

Out of place as Mr. Scully's present was, and though Lady Gorgon and her party sneered at the vulgar notion of venison

and turtle for supper, all the world at Oldborough ate very greedily of those two substantial dishes; and the Mayor's wife became from that day forth a mortal enemy of the Gorgons: for, sitting near her ladyship, who refused the proffered soup and meat, the Mayoress thought herself obliged to follow this disagreeable example. She sent away the plate of turtle with a sigh, saying, however, to the baronet's lady, "I thought, Mem, that the *Lord Mayor of London* always had turtle to his supper?"

"And what if he didn't, Biddy?" said his Honour the Mayor; "a good thing's a good thing, and here goes!" wherewith he plunged his spoon into the savoury mess. The Mayoress, as we have said, dared not; but she hated Lady Gorgon, and remembered it at the next election.

The pride, in fact, and insolence of the Gorgon party rendered every person in the room hostile to them, so soon as, gorged with meat, they began to find that courage which Britons invariably derive from their victuals. The show of the Gorgon plate seemed to offend the people. The Gorgon champagne was a long time, too, in making its appearance. Arrive, however, it did. The people were waiting for it; the young ladies, not accustomed to that drink, declined pledging their admirers until it was produced; the men, too, despised the bucellas and sherry, and were looking continually towards the door. At last, Mr. Rincer, the landlord, Mr. Hock, Sir George's butler, and sundry others entered the room. Bang! went the corks—fizz the foamy liquor sparkled into all sorts of glasses that were held out for its reception. Mr. Hock helped Sir George and his party, who drank with great gusto; the wine which was administered to the persons immediately around Mr. Scully was likewise pronounced to be good. But Mr. Perkins, who had taken his seat among the humbler individuals, and in the very middle of the table, observed that all these persons, after drinking, made to each other very wry and ominous faces, and whispered much. He tasted his wine: it was a villainous compound of sugar, vitriol, soda-water, and green gooseberries. At this moment a great clatter of forks was made by the president's and vice-president's party. Silence for a toast—'twas silence all.

"Landlord," said Mr. Perkins, starting up (the rogue,

where did his impudence come from?), "have you any champagne of *your own?*"

"Silence! down!" roared the Tories, the ladies looking aghast. "Silence! sit down you!" shrieked the well-known voice of the General.

"I beg your pardon, General," said young John Perkins; "but where *could* you have bought this champagne? My worthy friend, I know, is going to propose the ladies; let us at any rate drink such a toast in good wine." ("Hear, hear!") "Drink her ladyship's health in *this* stuff? I declare to goodness I would sooner drink it in beer!"

No pen can describe the uproar which arose: the anguish of the Gorgonites—the shrieks, jeers, cheers, ironic cries of "Swipes!" etc., which proceeded from the less genteel but more enthusiastic Scullyites.

"This vulgarity is too much," said Lady Gorgon, rising; and Mrs. Mayoress and the ladies of the party did so too.

The General, two squires, the clergyman, the Gorgon apothecary and attorney, with their respective ladies, followed her; they were plainly beaten from the field. Such of the Tories as dared remained, and in inglorious compromise shared the jovial Whig feast.

"Gentlemen and ladies," hiccuped Mr. Heeltap, "I'll give you a toast. 'Champagne to our real—hic—friends,' no, 'Real champagne to our friends,' and—hic—pooh! 'Champagne to our friends, and real pain to our enemies.' Huzzay!"

The Scully faction on this day bore the victory away; and if the polite reader has been shocked by certain vulgarities on the part of Mr. Scully and his friends, he must remember *imprimis* that Oldborough was an inconsiderable place—that the inhabitants thereof were chiefly tradespeople, not of refined habits—that Mr. Scully himself had only for three months mingled among the aristocracy—that his young friend Perkins was violently angry—and finally, and to conclude, that the proud vulgarity of the great Sir George Gorgon and his family was infinitely more odious and contemptible than the mean vulgarity of the Scullyites and their leader.

Immediately after this event, Mr. Scully and his young friend Perkins returned to town—the latter to his garrets in

Bedford Row; the former to his apartments on the first floor of the same house. He lived here to superintend his legal business, his London agents, Messrs. Higgs, Biggs, and Blatherwick, occupying the ground floor; the junior partner, Mr. Gustavus Blatherwick, the second flat of the house. Scully made no secret of his profession or residence: he was an attorney, and proud of it; he was the grandson of a labourer, and thanked God for it; he had made his fortune by his own honest labour, and why should he be ashamed of it?

And now, having explained at full length who the several heroes and heroines of this history were, and how they conducted themselves in the country, let us describe their behaviour in London, and the great events which occurred there.

You must know that Mr. Perkins bore away the tenderest recollections of the young lady with whom he had danced at the Oldborough ball, and, having taken particular care to find out where she dwelt when in the metropolis, managed soon to become acquainted with Aunt Biggs, and made himself so amiable to that lady, that she begged he would pass all his disengaged evenings at her lodgings in Caroline Place. Mrs. Biggs was perfectly aware that the young gentleman did not come for her bohea and muffins so much as for the sweeter conversation of her niece, Miss Gorgon; but seeing that these two young people were of an age when ideas of love and marriage will spring up, do what you will; seeing that her niece had a fortune, and Mr. Perkins had the prospect of a place, and was moreover a very amiable and well-disposed young fellow, she thought her niece could not do better than marry him; and Miss Gorgon thought so too. Now the public will be able to understand the meaning of that important conversation which is recorded at the very commencement of this history.

Lady Gorgon and her family were likewise in town; but, when in the metropolis, they never took notice of their relative, Miss Lucy, the idea of acknowledging an ex-schoolmistress living in Mecklenburgh Square being much too preposterous for a person of my Lady Gorgon's breeding and fashion. She did not, therefore, know of the progress which

sly Perkins was making all this while; for Lucy Gorgon did not think it was at all necessary to inform her ladyship how deeply she was smitten by the wicked young gentleman who had made all the disturbance at the Oldborough ball.

The intimacy of these young persons had, in fact, become so close, that on a certain sunshiny Sunday in December, after having accompanied Aunt Biggs to church, they had pursued their walk as far as that rendezvous of lovers, the Regent's Park, and were talking of their coming marriage with much confidential tenderness, before the bears in the Zoological Gardens.

Miss Lucy was ever and anon feeding those interesting animals with buns, to perform which act of charity she had clambered up on the parapet which surrounds their den. Mr. Perkins was below; and Miss Lucy, having distributed her buns, was on the point of following; but whether from timidity, or whether from a desire to do young Perkins an essential service, I know not; however, she found herself quite unwilling to jump down unaided.

"My dearest John," said she, "I never can jump that."

Whereupon, John stepped up, put one hand round Lucy's waist; and as one of hers gently fell upon his shoulder, Mr. Perkins took the other and said,—

"Now jump."

Hoop! jump she did; and so excessively active and clever was Mr. John Perkins, that he jumped Miss Lucy plump into the middle of a group formed of—

Lady Gorgon,

The Misses Gorgon,

Master George Augustus Frederick Grimsby Gorgon,

And a footman, poodle, and French governess, who had all been for two or three minutes listening to the billings and cooings of these imprudent young lovers.

CHAPTER II.

SHOWS HOW THE PLOT BEGAN TO THICKEN IN OR ABOUT BEDFORD ROW.

"MISS LUCY!"

"Upon my word!"

"I'm hanged if it arn't Lucy! How do, Lucy?" uttered Lady, the Misses, and Master Gorgon in a breath.

Lucy came forward, bending down her ambrosial curls, and blushing, as a modest young woman should; for, in truth, the scrape was very awkward. And as for John Perkins, he made a start, and then a step forwards, and then two backwards, and then began laying hands upon his black satin stock—in short, the sun did not shine at that moment upon a man who looked so exquisitely foolish.

"Miss Lucy Gorgon, is your aunt—is Mrs. Briggs here?" said Lady Gorgon, drawing herself up with much state.

"Mrs. Biggs, aunt," said Lucy demurely.

"Biggs or Briggs, madam, it is not of the slightest consequence. I presume that persons in my rank of life are not expected to know everybody's name in Magdeburg Square?" (Lady Gorgon had a house in Baker Street, and a dismal house it was.) "*Not* here," continued she, rightly interpreting Lucy's silence, "NOT here? And may I ask how long is it that young ladies have been allowed to walk abroad without chaperons, and to—to take a part in such scenes as that which we have just seen acted?"

To this question—and indeed it was rather difficult to answer—Miss Gorgon had no reply. There were the six grey eyes of her cousins glowering at her; there was George Augustus Frederick examining her with an air of extreme wonder, Mademoiselle the governess turning her looks demurely away, and awful Lady Gorgon glancing fiercely at her in front. Not mentioning the footman and poodle, what could a poor, modest, timid girl plead before such an inquisition, especially when she was clearly guilty? Add to this, that as Lady Gorgon, that majestic woman, always remarkable for her size and insolence of demeanour, had planted herself in the middle of the path, and spoke at the extreme pitch of

her voice, many persons walking in the neighbourhood had heard her ladyship's speech and stopped, and seemed disposed to await the rejoinder.

"For Heaven's sake, aunt, don't draw a crowd around us," said Lucy, who, indeed, was glad of the only escape that lay in her power. "I will tell you of the—of the circumstances of —of my engagement with this gentleman—with Mr. Perkins," added she, in a softer tone—so soft that the *'erkins* was quite inaudible.

"A Mr. What? An engagement without consulting your guardians!" screamed her ladyship. "This must be looked to! Jerningham, call round my carriage. Mademoiselle, you will have the goodness to walk home with Master Gorgon, and carry him, if you please, where there is wet; and, girls, as the day is fine, you will do likewise. Jerningham, you will attend the young ladies. Miss Gorgon, I will thank you to follow me immediately." And so saying, and looking at the crowd with ineffable scorn, and at Mr. Perkins not at all, the lady bustled away forwards, the files of Gorgon daughters and governess closing round and enveloping poor Lucy, who found herself carried forward against her will, and in a minute seated in her aunt's coach along with that tremendous person.

Her case was bad enough, but what was it to Perkins's? Fancy his blank surprise and rage at having his love thus suddenly ravished from him, and his delicious *tête-à-tête* interrupted. He managed, in an inconceivably short space of time, to conjure up half a million obstacles to his union. What should he do? He would rush on to Baker Street, and wait there until his Lucy left Lady Gorgon's house.

He could find no vehicle for him in the Regent's Park, and was, in consequence, obliged to make his journey on foot. Of course, he nearly killed himself with running, and ran so quick that he was just in time to see the two ladies step out of Lady Gorgon's carriage at her own house, and to hear Jerningham's fellow-footman roar to the Gorgonian coachman, "Half-past seven!" at which hour we are, to this day, convinced that Lady Gorgon was going out to dine. Mr. Jerningham's associate having banged to the door, with an insolent look towards Perkins, who was prying in with the most suspicious and indecent curiosity, retired,

exclaiming, "That chap has a hi to our greatcoats, I reckon!" and left John Perkins to pace the street and be miserable.

John Perkins then walked resolutely up and down dismal Baker Street, determined on an *éclaircissement*. He was for some time occupied in thinking how it was that the Gorgons were not at church—they who made such a parade of piety; and John Perkins smiled as he passed the chapel, and saw that two *charity sermons* were to be preached that day, and therefore it was that General Gorgon read prayers to his family at home in the morning.

Perkins at last saw that little General, in blue frock-coat and spotless buff gloves, saunter scowling home; and half an hour before his arrival, had witnessed the entrance of Jerningham, and the three gaunt Miss Gorgons, poodle, son and heir, and French governess, protected by him, into Sir George's mansion.

"Can she be going to stay all night?" mused poor John, after being on the watch for three hours; "that footman is the only person who has left the house;" when presently, to his inexpressible delight, he saw a very dirty hackney-coach clatter up to the Gorgon door, out of which first issued the ruby plush breeches and stalwart calves of Mr. Jerningham; these were followed by his body, and then the gentleman, ringing modestly, was admitted.

Again the door opened: a lady came out; nor was she followed by the footman, who crossed his legs at the door-post and allowed her to mount the jingling vehicle as best she might. Mr. Jerningham had witnessed the scene in the Park Gardens, had listened to the altercation through the library keyhole, and had been mighty sulky at being ordered to call a coach for this young woman. He did not therefore deign to assist her to mount.

But there was *one* who did! Perkins was by the side of his Lucy; he had seen her start back and cry, "La, John!" —had felt her squeeze his arm—had mounted with her into the coach, and then shouted with a voice of thunder to the coachman, "Caroline Place, Mecklenburgh Square."

But Mr. Jerningham would have been much more surprised and puzzled if he had waited one minute longer and seen this Mr. Perkins, who had so gallantly escaladed the

hackney-coach, step out of it with the most mortified, miserable, chapfallen countenance possible.

The fact is, he had found poor Lucy sobbing fit to break her heart; and instead of consoling her, as he expected, he only seemed to irritate her further, for she said, "Mr. Perkins, I beg—I insist that you leave the carriage." And when Perkins made some movement (which, not being in the vehicle at the time, we have never been able to comprehend), she suddenly sprang from the back seat and began pulling at a large piece of cord which communicated with the wrist of the gentleman driving, and, screaming to him at the top of her voice, bade him immediately stop.

This Mr. Coachman did, with a curious, puzzled, grinning air.

Perkins descended, and on being asked, "Vere ham I to drive the young 'oman, sir?" I am sorry to say muttered something like an oath, and uttered the above-mentioned words, "Caroline Place, Mecklenburgh Square," in a tone which I should be inclined to describe as both dogged and sheepish—very different from that cheery voice which he had used when he first gave the order.

Poor Lucy, in the course of those fatal three hours which had passed while Mr. Perkins was pacing up and down Baker Street, had received a lecture which lasted exactly one hundred and eighty minutes—from her aunt first, then from her uncle, whom we have seen marching homewards, and often from both together.

Sir George Gorgon and his lady poured out such a flood of advice and abuse against the poor girl, that she came away from the interview quite timid and cowering; and when she saw John Perkins (the sly rogue! how well he thought he had managed the trick!) she shrank from him as if he had been a demon of wickedness, ordered him out of the carriage, and went home by herself, convinced that she had committed some tremendous sin.

While, then, her coach jingled away to Caroline Place, Perkins, once more alone, bent his steps in the same direction. A desperate, heart-stricken man, he passed by the beloved's door, saw lights in the front drawing-room, felt probably that she was there; but he could not go in. Moodily

he paced down Doughty Street, and turning abruptly into Bedford Row, rushed into his own chambers, where Mrs. Snooks, the laundress, had prepared his humble Sabbath meal.

A cheerful fire blazed in his garret, and Mrs. Snooks had prepared for him the favourite blade-bone he loved (blest four-days' dinner for a bachelor—roast, cold, hashed, grilled blade-bone, the fourth being better than the first); but although he usually did rejoice in this meal—ordinarily, indeed, grumbling that there was not enough to satisfy him—he, on this occasion, after two mouthfuls, flung down his knife and fork, and buried his two claws in his hair.

"Snooks," said he at last, very moodily, "remove this d—— mutton; give me my writing things, and some hot brandy-and-water."

This was done without much alarm; for you must know that Perkins used to dabble in poetry, and ordinarily prepared himself for composition by this kind of stimulus.

He wrote hastily a few lines.

"Snooks, put on your bonnet," said he, "and carry this—*you know where!*" he added, in a hollow, heart-breaking tone of voice that affected poor Snooks almost to tears. She went, however, with the note, which was to this purpose:—

"Lucy! Lucy! my soul's love, what, what has happened? I am writing this"—(*a gulp of brandy-and-water*)—"in a state bordering on distraction—madness—insanity" (*another*). "Why did you send me out of the coach in that cruel, cruel way? Write to me a word, a line; tell me, tell me, I may come to you, and leave me not in this agonizing condition. Your faithful" (*glog—glog—glog—the whole glass*)—

"J. P."

He never signed John Perkins in full—he couldn't, it was so unromantic.

Well, this missive was dispatched by Mrs. Snooks; and Perkins, in a fearful state of excitement, haggard, wild, and with more brandy-and-water, awaited the return of his messenger.

When, at length, after about an absence of forty years, as it seemed to him, the old lady returned with a large packet,

Perkins seized it with a trembling hand, and was yet more frightened to see the handwriting of Mrs. or Miss Biggs :—

"My dear Mr. Perkins," she began—"Although I am not your soul's adored, I performed her part for once, since I have read your letter, as I told her. You need not be very much alarmed, although Lucy is at this moment in bed, and unwell; for the poor girl has had a sad scene at her grand uncle's house in Baker Street, and came home very much affected. Rest, however, will restore her, for she is not one of your nervous sort; and I hope, when you come in the morning, you will see her as blooming as she was when you went out to-day on that unlucky walk.

"See what Sir George Gorgon says of us all! You won't challenge him, I know, as he is to be your uncle, and so I may show you his letter.

"Good-night, my dear John. Do not go *quite* distracted before morning; and believe me, your loving aunt,

"Jemima Biggs."

"Baker Street, *11th December.*

"Major-General Sir George Gorgon has heard with the utmost disgust and surprise of the engagement which Miss Lucy Gorgon has thought fit to form.

"The Major-General cannot conceal his indignation at the share which Miss Biggs has taken in this disgraceful transaction.

"Sir George Gorgon puts an absolute veto upon all further communication between his niece and the low-born adventurer who has been admitted into her society, and begs to say that Lieutenant Fitch, of the Lifeguards, is the gentleman who he intends shall marry Miss Gorgon.

"It is the Major-General's wish that on the 28th Miss Gorgon should be ready to come to his house, in Baker Street, where she will be more safe from impertinent intrusions than she has been in Mucklebury Square.

"Mrs. Biggs,
"Caroline Place,
"Mecklenburgh Square."

When poor John Perkins read this epistle, blank rage and

wonder filled his soul, at the audacity of the little General, who thus, without the smallest title in the world, pretended to dispose of the hand and fortune of his niece. The fact is, that Sir George had such a transcendent notion of his own dignity and station, that it never for a moment entered his head that his niece, or anybody else connected with him, should take a single step in life without previously receiving his orders; and Mr. Fitch, a baronet's son, having expressed an admiration of Lucy, Sir George had determined that his suit should be accepted, and really considered Lucy's preference of another as downright treason.

John Perkins determined on the death of Fitch as the very least reparation that should satisfy him, and vowed too that some of the General's blood should be shed for the words which he had dared to utter.

We have said that William Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P., occupied the first floor of Mr. Perkins's house, in Bedford Row; and the reader is further to be informed that an immense friendship had sprung up between these two gentlemen. The fact is, that poor John was very much flattered by Scully's notice, and began in a very short time to fancy himself a political personage; for he had made several of Scully's speeches, written more than one letter from him to his constituents, and, in a word, acted as his gratis clerk. At least a guinea a week did Mr. Perkins save to the pockets of Mr. Scully, and with hearty good will too, for he adored the great William Pitt, and believed every word that dropped from the pompous lips of that gentleman.

Well, after having discussed Sir George Gorgon's letter, poor Perkins, in the utmost fury of mind that his darling should be slandered so, feeling a desire for fresh air, determined to descend to the garden and smoke a cigar in that rural, quiet spot. The night was very calm. The moonbeams slept softly upon the herbage of Gray's Inn gardens, and bathed with silver splendour Theobald's Road. A million of little frisky twinkling stars attended their queen, who looked with bland round face upon their gambols, as they peeped in and out from the azure heavens. Along Gray's Inn wall a lazy row of cabs stood listlessly, for who would call a cab on such a night? Meanwhile their drivers, at the

alehouse near, smoked the short pipe or quaffed the foaming beer. Perhaps from Gray's Inn Lane some broken sounds of Irish revelry might rise. Issuing perhaps from Raymond Buildings gate, six lawyers' clerks might whoop a tipsy song, or the loud watchman yell the passing hour; but beyond this all was silence; and young Perkins, as he sat in the summer-house at the bottom of the garden, and contemplated the peaceful heaven, felt some influences of it entering into his soul, and almost forgetting revenge, thought but of peace and love.

Presently, he was aware there was some one else pacing the garden. Who could it be? Not Blatherwick, for he passed the Sabbath with his grandmamma at Clapham; not Scully surely, for he always went to Bethesda Chapel, and to a select prayer-meeting afterwards. Alas! it *was* Scully; for though that gentleman *said* that he went to chapel, we have it for a fact that he did not always keep his promise, and was at this moment employed in rehearsing an extempore speech, which he proposed to deliver at St. Stephen's.

"Had I, sir," spouted he, with folded arms, slowly pacing to and fro—"had I, sir, entertained the smallest possible intention of addressing the House on the present occasion—hum, on the present occasion—I would have endeavoured to prepare myself in a way that should have at least shown my sense of the greatness of the subject before the House's consideration, and the nature of the distinguished audience I have the honour to address. I am, sir, a plain man, born of the people, myself one of the people, having won, thank Heaven, an honourable fortune and position by my own honest labour; and standing here as I do—"

* * * * *

Here Mr. Scully (it may be said that he never made a speech without bragging about himself; and an excellent plan it is, for people cannot help believing you at last)—here, I say, Mr. Scully, who had one arm raised, felt himself suddenly tipped on the shoulder, and heard a voice saying, "Your money or your life!"

The honourable gentleman twirled round as if he had been shot; the papers on which a great part of this impromptu was written dropped from his lifted hand, and some

of them were actually borne on the air into neighbouring gardens. The man was, in fact, in the direst fright.

"It's only I," said Perkins, with rather a forced laugh, when he saw the effect that his wit had produced.

"Only you! And pray what the dev——what right have you to—to come upon a man of my rank in that way, and disturb me in the midst of very important meditations?" asked Mr. Scully, beginning to grow fierce.

"I want your advice," said Perkins, "on a matter of the very greatest importance to me. You know my idea of marrying?"

"Marry!" said Scully; "I thought you had given up that silly scheme. And how, pray, do you intend to live?"

"Why, my intended has a couple of hundreds a year, and my clerkship in the Tape and Sealing-Wax Office will be as much more."

"Clerkship—Tape and Sealing-Wax Office—Government sinecure! Why, good heavens! John Perkins, you don't tell *me* that you are going to accept any such thing?"

"It *is* a very small salary, certainly," said John, who had a decent notion of his own merits; "but consider, six months' vacation, two hours in the day, and those spent over the newspapers. After all, it's——"

"After all, it's a swindle," roared out Mr. Scully—"a swindle upon the country; an infamous tax upon the people, who starve that you may fatten in idleness. But take this clerkship in the Tape and Sealing-Wax Office," continued the patriot, his bosom heaving with noble indignation, and his eye flashing the purest fire—"*take* this clerkship, John Perkins, and sanction tyranny, by becoming one of its agents; sanction dishonesty by sharing in its plunder; do this, BUT never more be friend of mine. Had I a child," said the patriot, clasping his hands and raising his eyes to heaven, "I would rather see him dead, sir—dead, dead at my feet—than the servant of a Government which all honest men despise." And here, giving a searching glance at Perkins, Mr. Scully began tramping up and down the garden in a perfect fury.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the timid John Perkins—"don't say *so*. My dear Mr. Scully, I'm not the dishonest

character you suppose me to be; I never looked at the matter in this light. I'll—I'll consider of it. I'll tell Crampton that I will give up the place; but for heaven's sake don't let me forfeit *your* friendship, which is dearer to me than any place in the world."

Mr. Scully pressed his hand, and said nothing; and though their interview lasted a full half-hour longer, during which they paced up and down the gravel walk, we shall not breathe a single syllable of their conversation, as it has nothing to do with our tale.

The next morning, after an interview with Miss Lucy, John Perkins, Esq., was seen to issue from Mrs. Biggs's house, looking particularly pale, melancholy, and thoughtful; and he did not stop until he reached a certain door in Downing Street, where was the office of a certain great Minister, and the offices of the clerks in his lordship's department.

The head of them was Mr. Josiah Crampton, who has now to be introduced to the public. He was a little old gentleman, some sixty years of age, maternal uncle to John Perkins; a bachelor, who had been about forty-two years employed in the department of which he was now the head.

After waiting four hours in an ante-room, where a number of Irishmen, some newspaper editors, many pompous-looking political personages asking for the "first lord," a few sauntering clerks, and numbers of swift active messengers passed to and fro,—after waiting for four hours, making drawings on the blotting-book, and reading the *Morning Post* for that day week, Mr. Perkins was informed that he might go into his uncle's room, and did so accordingly.

He found a little hard old gentleman seated at a table covered with every variety of sealing-wax, blotting-paper, envelopes, dispatch-boxes, green tapers, etc., etc. An immense fire was blazing in the grate, an immense sheet-almanack hung over that, a screen, three or four chairs, and a faded Turkey carpet, formed the rest of the furniture of this remarkable room—which I have described thus particularly, because, in the course of a long official life, I have remarked that such is the invariable decoration of political rooms.

"Well, John," said the little hard old gentleman, pointing to an armchair, "I'm told you've been here since eleven. Why the deuce do you come so early?"

"I had important business," answered Mr. Perkins stoutly; and as his uncle looked up with a comical expression of wonder, John began in a solemn tone to deliver a little speech which he had composed, and which proved him to be a very worthy, easy, silly fellow.

"Sir," said Mr. Perkins, "you have known for some time past the nature of my political opinions, and the intimacy which I have had the honour to form with one—with some of the leading members of the Liberal party." (A grin from Mr. Crampton.) "When first, by your kindness, I was promised the clerkship in the Tape and Sealing-Wax Office, my opinions were not formed as they are now; and having taken the advice of the gentlemen with whom I act"—(an enormous grin)—"the advice, I say, of the gentlemen with whom I act, and the counsel likewise of my own conscience, I am compelled, with the deepest grief, to say, my dear uncle, that I—I——"

"That you—what, sir?" exclaimed little Mr. Crampton, bouncing off his chair. "You don't mean to say that you are such a fool as to decline the place?"

"I do decline the place," said Perkins, whose blood rose at the word "fool." "As a man of honour, I cannot take it."

"Not take it! and how are you to live? On the rent of that house of yours? For, by gad, sir, if you give up the clerkship, I never will give you a shilling."

"It cannot be helped," said Mr. Perkins, looking as much like a martyr as he possibly could, and thinking himself a very fine fellow. "I have talents, sir, which I hope to cultivate; and am member of a profession by which a man may hope to rise to the very highest offices of the state."

"Profession, talents, offices of the state! Are you mad, John Perkins, that you come to me with such insufferable twaddle as this? Why, do you think if you *had* been capable of rising at the bar, I would have taken so much trouble about getting you a place? No, sir; you are too fond of pleasure, and bed, and tea-parties, and small-talk, and reading novels, and playing the flute, and writing sonnets. You

would no more rise at the bar than my messenger, sir. It was because I knew your disposition—that hopeless, careless, irresolute good-humour of yours—that I had determined to keep you out of danger, by placing you in a snug shelter, where the storms of the world would not come near you. You must have principles forsooth; and you must marry Miss Gorgon, of course; and by the time you have gone ten circuits, and had six children, you will have eaten up every shilling of your wife's fortune, and be as briefless as you are now. Who the deuce has put all this nonsense into your head? I think I know."

Mr. Perkins's ears tingled as these hard words saluted them; and he scarcely knew whether he ought to knock his uncle down, or fall at his feet and say, "Uncle, I have been a fool, and I know it." The fact is, that in his interview with Miss Gorgon and her aunt in the morning, when he came to tell them of the resolution he had formed to give up the place, both the ladies and John himself had agreed, with a thousand rapturous tears and exclamations, that he was one of the noblest young men that ever lived, had acted as became himself, and might with perfect propriety give up the place, his talents being so prodigious that no power on earth could hinder him from being Lord Chancellor. Indeed, John and Lucy had always thought the clerkship quite beneath him, and were not a little glad, perhaps, at finding a pretext for decently refusing it. But as Perkins was a young gentleman whose candour was such that he was always swayed by the opinions of the last speaker, he did begin to feel now the truth of his uncle's statements, however disagreeable they might be.

Mr. Crampton continued:—

"I think I know the cause of your patriotism. Has not William Pitt Scully, Esq., had something to do with it?"

Mr. Perkins *could* not turn any redder than he was, but confessed with deep humiliation that "he *had* consulted Mr. Scully among other friends."

Mr. Crampton smiled, drew a letter from a heap before him, and tearing off the signature, handed over the document to his nephew. It contained the following paragraphs:—

"Hawksby has sounded Scully: we can have him any day

we want him. He talks very big at present, and says he would not take anything under a..... This is absurd. He has a Yorkshire nephew coming up to town, and wants a place for him. There is one vacant in the Tape Office, he says. Have you not a promise of it?"

"I can't—I can't believe it," said John; "this, sir, is some weak invention of the enemy. Scully is the most honourable man breathing."

"Mr. Scully is a gentleman in a very fair way to make a fortune," answered Mr. Crampton. "Look you, John—it is just as well for your sake that I should give you the news a few weeks before the papers, for I don't want you to be ruined if I can help it, as I don't wish to have you on my hands. We know all the particulars of Scully's history. He was a Tory attorney at Oldborough. He was jilted by the present Lady Gorgon, turned Radical, and fought Sir George in his own borough. Sir George would have had the peerage he is dying for, had he not lost that second seat (by-the-bye, my lady will be here in five minutes), and Scully is now quite firm there. Well, my dear lad, we have bought your incorruptible Scully. Look here"—and Mr. Crampton produced three *Morning Posts*.

"'The Honourable Henry Hawksby's Dinner-Party.—Lord So-and-So—Duke of So-and-So—W. Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P.'

"Hawksby is our neutral, our dinner-giver.

"'Lady Diana Doldrum's Rout.—W. Pitt Scully, Esq.,' again.

"The Earl of Mantrap's Grand Dinner.'—A Duke—four Lords—'Mr. Scully, and *Sir George Gorgon*.'"

"Well, but I don't see how you have bought him; look at his votes."

"My dear John," said Mr. Crampton, jingling his watch-seals very complacently, "I am letting you into fearful secrets. The great common end of party is to buy your opponents—the great statesman buys them for nothing."

Here the attendant genius of Mr. Crampton made his appearance, and whispered something, to which the little gentleman said, "Show her ladyship in"—when the attendant disappeared.

"John," said Mr. Crampton, with a very queer smile, "you can't stay in this room while Lady Gorgon is with me; but there is a little clerk's room behind the screen there, where you can wait until I call you."

John retired, and as he closed the door of communication, strange to say, little Mr. Crampton sprang up and said, "Confound the young ninny, he has shut the door!"

Mr. Crampton then, remembering that he wanted a map in the next room, sprang into it, left the door half open in coming out, and was in time to receive her ladyship with smiling face as she, ushered by Mr. Strongitharm, majestically sailed in.

CHAPTER III.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

In issuing from and leaving open the door of the inner room, Mr. Crampton had bestowed upon Mr. Perkins a look so peculiarly arch, that even he, simple as he was, began to imagine that some mystery was about to be cleared up, or some mighty matter to be discussed. Presently he heard the well-known voice of Lady Gorgon in conversation with his uncle. What could their talk be about? Mr. Perkins was dying to know, and, shall we say it? advanced to the door on tiptoe and listened with all his might.

Her ladyship, that Juno of a woman, if she had not borrowed Venus's girdle to render herself irresistible, at least had adopted a tender, coaxing, wheedling, frisky tone, quite different from her ordinary dignified style of conversation. She called Mr. Crampton a naughty man for neglecting his old friends, vowed that Sir George was quite hurt at his not coming to dine—nor fixing a day when he would come—and added, with a most engaging ogle, that she had three fine girls at home, who would perhaps make an evening pass pleasantly, even to such a gay bachelor as Mr. Crampton.

"Madam," said he with much gravity, "the daughters of such a mother must be charming; but I, who have seen your ladyship, am, alas! proof against even them."

Both parties here heaved tremendous sighs, and affected to be wonderfully unhappy about something.

"I wish," after a pause, said Lady Gorgon—"I wish, dear Mr. Crampton, you would not use that odious title 'my ladyship;' you know it always makes me melancholy."

"Melancholy, my dear Lady Gorgon, and why?"

"Because it makes me think of another title that ought to have been mine—ours (I speak for dear Sir George's and my darling boy's sake, Heaven knows, not mine). What a sad disappointment it has been to my husband, that after all his services, all the promises he has had, they have never given him his peerage. As for me, you know——"

"For you, my dear madam, I know quite well that you care for no such bauble as a coronet, except in so far as it may confer honour upon those most dear to you, excellent wife and noble mother as you are. Heigho! what a happy man is Sir George!"

Here there was another pause, and if Mr. Perkins could have seen what was taking place behind the screen, he would have beheld little Mr. Crampton looking into Lady Gorgon's face, with as love-sick a Romeo-gaze as he could possibly counterfeit; while her ladyship, blushing somewhat and turning her own grey gogglers up to heaven, received all his words for gospel, and sat fancying herself to be the best, most meritorious, and most beautiful creature in the three kingdoms.

"You men are terrible flatterers," continued she; "but you say right: for myself I value not these empty distinctions. I am growing old, Mr. Crampton—yes, indeed, I am, although you smile so incredulously—and let me add, that *my* thoughts are fixed upon *higher* things than earthly crowns. But tell me, you who are all in all with Lord Bagwig, are we never to have our peerage? His Majesty, I know, is not averse; the services of dear Sir George to a member of his Majesty's august family, I know, have been appreciated in the highest quarter. Ever since the peace we have had a promise. Four hundred pounds has Sir George spent at the Heralds' Office (I myself am of one of the most ancient families in the kingdom, Mr. Crampton); and the poor dear man's health is really ruined by the anxious, sickening feeling of hope so long delayed."

Mr. Crampton now assumed an air of much solemnity.

"My dear Lady Gorgon," said he, "will you let me be frank with you, and will you promise solemnly that what I am going to tell you shall never be repeated to a single soul?"

Lady Gorgon promised.

"Well, then, since the truth you must know, you yourselves have been in part the cause of the delay of which you complain. You gave us two votes five years ago, you now only give us one. If Sir George were to go up to the Peers, we should lose even that one vote; and would it be common sense in us to incur such a loss? Mr. Scully, the Liberal, would return another member of his own way of thinking; and as for the Lords, we have, you know, a majority there."

"Oh, that horrid man!" said Lady Gorgon, cursing Mr. Scully in her heart, and beginning to play a rapid tattoo with her feet; "that miscreant, that traitor, that—that attorney has been our ruin!"

"Horrid man if you please, but give me leave to tell you that the horrid man is not the sole cause of your ruin—if ruin you will call it. I am sorry to say that I do candidly think Ministers think that Sir George Gorgon has lost his influence in Oldborough as much through his own fault as through Mr. Scully's cleverness."

"Our own fault! Good heavens! Have we not done everything—everything that persons of our station in the county could do, to keep those misguided men? Have we not remonstrated, threatened, taken away our custom from the Mayor, established a Conservative apothecary—in fact, done all that gentlemen could do? But these are such times, Mr. Crampton: the spirit of revolution is abroad, and the great families of England are menaced by democratic insolence."

This was Sir George Gorgon's speech always after dinner, and was delivered by his lady with a great deal of stateliness. Somewhat, perhaps, to her annoyance, Mr. Crampton only smiled, shook his head, and said,—

"Nonsense, my dear Lady Gorgon—pardon the phrase, but I am a plain old man, and call things by their names. Now, will you let me whisper in your ear one word of truth?

You have tried all sorts of remonstrances, and exerted yourself to maintain your influence in every way, except the right one, and that is——"

"What, in heaven's name?"

"Conciliation. We know your situation in the borough. Mr. Scully's whole history, and, pardon me for saying so (but we men in office know everything), yours——"

Lady Gorgon's ears and cheeks now assumed the hottest hue of crimson. She thought of her former passages with Scully, and of the days when—but never mind when; for she suffered her veil to fall, and buried her head in the folds of her handkerchief. Vain folds! The wily little Mr. Crampton could see all that passed behind the cambric, and continued,—

"Yes, madam, we know the absurd hopes that were formed by a certain attorney twenty years since. We know how, up to this moment, he boasts of certain walks——"

"With the governess—we were always with the governess!" shrieked out Lady Gorgon, clasping her hands. "She was not the wisest of women."

"With the governess, of course," said Mr. Crampton firmly. "Do you suppose that any man dare breathe a syllable against your spotless reputation? Never, my dear madam. But what I would urge is this—you have treated your disappointed admirer too cruelly."

"What! the traitor who has robbed us of our rights?"

"He never would have robbed you of your rights if you had been more kind to him. You should be gentle, madam; you should forgive him—you should be friends with him."

"With a traitor? never!"

"Think what made him a traitor, Lady Gorgon; look in your glass, and say if there be not some excuse for him? Think of the feelings of the man who saw beauty such as yours—I am a plain man, and must speak—virtue such as yours, in the possession of a rival. By heavens, madam, I think he was *right* to hate Sir George Gorgon! Would you have him allow such a prize to be ravished from him without a pang on his part?"

"He was, I believe, very much attached to me," said Lady Gorgon, quite delighted; "but you must be aware

that a young man of his station in life could not look up to a person of my rank."

"Surely not; it was monstrous pride and arrogance in Mr. Scully. But *que voulez-vous?* Such is the world's way. Scully could not help loving you—who that knows you can? I am a plain man, and say what I think. He loves you still. Why make an enemy of him, who would at a word be at your feet? Dearest Lady Gorgon, listen to me. Sir George Gorgon and Mr. Scully have already met—their meeting was our contrivance. It is for our interest, for yours, that they should be friends. If there were two Ministerial Members for Oldborough, do you think your husband's peerage would be less secure? I am not at liberty to tell you all I know on this subject; but do, I entreat you, be reconciled to him."

And after a little more conversation, which was carried on by Mr. Crampton in the same tender way, this important interview closed, and Lady Gorgon, folding her shawl round her, threaded certain mysterious passages, and found her way to her carriage in Whitehall.

"I hope you have not been listening, you rogue?" said Mr. Crampton to his nephew, who blushed most absurdly by way of answer. "You would have heard great state secrets, if you had dared to do so. That woman is perpetually here, and if peerages are to be had for the asking, she ought to have been a duchess by this time. I would not have admitted her but for a reason that I have. Go you now and ponder upon what you have heard and seen. Be on good terms with Scully; and, above all, speak not a word concerning our interview—no, not a word, even to your mistress. By the way, I presume, sir, you will recall your resignation?"

The bewildered Perkins was about to stammer out a speech, when his uncle, cutting it short, pushed him gently out of the door.

* * * * *

At the period when the important events occurred which have been recorded here, parties ran very high, and a mighty struggle for the vacant Speakership was about to come on. The Right Honourable Robert Pincher was the Ministerial

candidate, and Sir Charles Macabaw was patronized by the Opposition. The two Members for Oldborough of course took different sides, the baronet being of the Pincher faction, while Mr. William Pitt Scully strongly supported the Macabaw party.

It was Mr. Scully's intention to deliver an impromptu speech upon the occasion of the election, and he and his faithful Perkins prepared it between them; for the latter gentleman had wisely kept his uncle's counsel and his own, and Mr. Scully was quite ignorant of the conspiracy that was brooding. Indeed, so artfully had that young Machiavel of a Perkins conducted himself, that when asked by his patron whether he had given up his place in the Tape and Sealing-Wax Office, he replied that "he *had* tendered his resignation," but did not say one word about having recalled it.

"You were right, my boy, quite right," said Mr. Scully. "A man of uncompromising principles should make no compromise." And herewith he sat down and wrote off a couple of letters, one to Mr. Hawksby, telling him that the place in the Sealing-Wax Office was, as he had reason to know, vacant; and the other to his nephew, stating that it was to be his. "Under the rose, my dear Bob," added Mr. Scully, "it will cost you five hundred pounds; but you cannot invest your money better."

It is needless to state that the affair was to be conducted "with the strictest secrecy and honour," and that the money was to pass through Mr. Scully's hands.

While, however, the great Pincher and Macabaw question was yet undecided, an event occurred to Mr. Scully which had a great influence upon his after-life. A second grand banquet was given at the Earl of Mantrap's. Lady Mantrap requested him to conduct Lady Gorgon to dinner; and the latter, with a charming timidity, and a gracious melancholy look into his face (after which her veined eyelids veiled her azure eyes), put her hand into the trembling one of Mr. Scully and said, as much as looks could say, "Forgive and forget."

Down went Scully to dinner. There were dukes on his right hand and earls on his left; there were but two persons without title in the midst of that glittering assemblage; the

very servants looked like noblemen. The cook had done wonders; the wines were cool and rich, and Lady Gorgon was splendid! What attention did everybody pay to her and to him! Why *would* she go on gazing into his face with that tender, imploring look? In other words, Scully, after partaking of soup and fish (he, during their discussion, had been thinking over all the former love-and-hate passages between himself and Lady Gorgon), turned very red, and began talking to her.

"Were you not at the opera on Tuesday?" began he, assuming at once the airs of a man of fashion. "I thought I caught a glimpse of you in the Duchess of Diddlebury's box."

"Opera, Mr. Scully?" (pronouncing the word "Scully" with the utmost softness). "Ah, no! we seldom go, and yet too often. For serious persons the enchantments of that place are too dangerous. I am so nervous—so delicate; the smallest trifle so agitates, depresses, or irritates me, that I dare not yield myself up to the excitement of music. I am too passionately attached to it; and, shall I tell you? it has such a strange influence upon me, that the smallest false note almost drives me to distraction, and for that very reason I hardly ever go to a concert or a ball."

"Egad," thought Scully, "I recollect when she would dance down a matter of five-and-forty couple, and jingle away at the 'Battle of Prague' all day."

She continued: "Don't you recollect, I do—with, oh, what regret!—that day at Oldborough race-ball, when I behaved with such sad rudeness to you? You will scarcely believe me, and yet I assure you 'tis the fact, the music had made me almost mad. Do let me ask your pardon for my conduct. I was not myself. Oh, Mr. Scully! I am no worldly woman; I know my duties, and I feel my wrongs. Nights and nights have I lain awake weeping and thinking of that unhappy day—that I should ever speak so to an old friend; for we *were* old friends, were we not?"

Scully did not speak, but his eyes were bursting out of his head, and his face was the exact colour of a deputy-lieutenant's uniform.

"That I should ever forget myself and you so! How I

have been longing for this opportunity to ask you to forgive me! I asked Lady Mantrap, when I heard you were to be here, to invite me to her party. Come, I know you will forgive me—your eyes say you will. You used to look so in old days, and forgive me my caprices *then*. Do give me a little wine; we will drink to the memory of old days."

Her eyes filled with tears; and poor Scully's hand caused such a rattling and trembling of the glass and the decanter that the Duke of Doldrum—who had been, during the course of this whispered sentimentality, describing a famous run with the Queen's hounds at the top of his voice—stopped at the jingling of the glass, and his tale was lost for ever. Scully hastily drank his wine, and Lady Gorgon turned round to her next neighbour, a little gentleman in black, between whom and herself certain conscious looks passed.

"I am glad poor Sir George is not here," said he, smiling.

Lady Gorgon said, "Pooh, for shame!" The little gentleman was no other than Josiah Crampton, Esq., that eminent financier, and he was now going through the curious calculation before mentioned, by which you *buy a man for nothing*. He intended to pay the very same price for Sir George Gorgon, too. But there was no need to tell the baronet so; only of this the reader must be made aware.

While Mr. Crampton was conducting this intrigue, which was to bring a new recruit to the Ministerial ranks, his mighty spirit condescended to ponder upon subjects of infinitely less importance, and to arrange plans for the welfare of his nephew and the young woman to whom he had made a present of his heart. These young persons, as we said before, had arranged to live in Mr. Perkins's own house in Bedford Row. It was of a peculiar construction, and might more properly be called a house and a half; for a snug little tenement of four chambers protruded from the back of the house into the garden. These rooms communicated with the drawing-rooms occupied by Mr. Scully; and Perkins, who acted as his friend and secretary, used frequently to sit in the one nearest the Member's study, in order that he might be close at hand to confer with that great man. The rooms had a private entrance too, were newly decorated, and in them the young couple proposed to live; the kitchen and garrets being theirs likewise.

What more could they need? We are obliged to be particular in describing these apartments, for extraordinary events occurred therein.

To say the truth, until the present period Mr. Crampton had taken no great interest in his nephew's marriage, or, indeed, in the young man himself. The old gentleman was of a saturnine turn, and inclined to undervalue the qualities of Mr. Perkins, which were idleness, simplicity, enthusiasm, and easy good-nature.

"Such fellows never do anything in the world," he would say, and for such he had accordingly the most profound contempt. But when, after John Perkins's repeated entreaties, he had been induced to make the acquaintance of Miss Gorgon, he became instantly charmed with her, and warmly espoused her cause against her overbearing relations.

At his suggestion she wrote back to decline Sir George Gorgon's peremptory invitation, and hinted at the same time that she had attained an age and a position which enabled her to be the mistress of her own actions. To this letter there came an answer from Lady Gorgon which we shall not copy, but which simply stated that Miss Lucy Gorgon's conduct was unchristian, ungrateful, unladylike, and immodest; that the Gorgon family disowned her for the future, and left her at liberty to form whatever base connections she pleased.

"A pretty world this," said Mr. Crampton, in a great rage, when the letter was shown to him. "This same fellow, Scully, dissuades my nephew from taking a place, because Scully wants it for himself. This prude of a Lady Gorgon cries out shame, and disowns an innocent amiable girl; she a heartless jilt herself once, and a heartless flirt now. The Pharisees, the Pharisees! And to call mine a base family too!"

Now, Lady Gorgon did not in the least know Mr. Crampton's connection with Mr. Perkins, or she would have been much more guarded in her language; but whether she knew it or not, the old gentleman felt a huge indignation, and determined to have his revenge.

"That's right, uncle! *Shall* I call Gorgon out?" said the impetuous young Perkins, who was all for blood.

"John, you are a fool," said his uncle. "You shall have

a better revenge: you shall be married from Sir George Gorgon's house, and you shall see Mr. William Pitt Scully sold for nothing." This to the veteran diplomatist seemed to be the highest triumph which man could possibly enjoy.

It was very soon to take place, and, as has been the case ever since the world began, woman, lovely woman, was to be the cause of Scully's fall. The tender scene at Lord Mantrap's was followed by many others equally sentimental. Sir George Gorgon called upon his colleague the very next day, and brought with him a card from Lady Gorgon inviting Mr. Scully to dinner. The attorney eagerly accepted the invitation, was received in Baker Street by the whole amiable family with much respectful cordiality, and was pressed to repeat his visits as country neighbours should. More than once did he call, and somehow always at the hour when Sir George was away at his club, or riding in the Park, or elsewhere engaged. Sir George Gorgon was very old, very feeble, very much shattered in constitution. Lady Gorgon used to impart her fears to Mr. Scully every time he called there, and the sympathizing attorney used to console her as best he might. Sir George's country agent neglected the property—his lady consulted Mr. Scully concerning it. He knew to a fraction how large her jointure was; how she was to have Gorgon Castle for her life; and how, in the event of the young baronet's death (he, too, was a sickly poor boy), the chief part of the estates, bought by her money, would be at her absolute disposal.

"What a pity these odious politics prevent me from having you for our agent," would Lady Gorgon say; and indeed Scully thought it was a pity too. Ambitious Scully! what wild notions filled his brain! He used to take leave of Lady Gorgon and ruminate upon these things; and when he was gone, Sir George and her ladyship used to laugh.

"If we can but commit him—if we can but make him vote for Pincher," said the General, "my peerage is secure. Hawksby and Crampton as good as told me so."

The point had been urged upon Mr. Scully repeatedly and adroitly. "Is not Pincher a more experienced man than Macabaw?" would Sir George say to his guest over their wine. Scully allowed it. "Can't you vote for him on per-

sonal grounds, and say so in the House?" Scully wished he could—how he wished he could! Every time the General coughed, Scully saw his friend's desperate situation more and more, and thought how pleasant it would be to be lord of Gorgon Castle. "Knowing my property," cried Sir George, "as you do, and with your talents and integrity, what a comfort it would be could I leave you as guardian to my boy! But these cursed politics prevent it, my dear fellow. Why *will* you be a Radical?" And Scully cursed politics too. "Hang the low-bred rogue," added Sir George, when William Pitt Scully left the house, "he will do everything but promise."

"My dear General," said Lady Gorgon, sidling up to him and patting him on his old yellow cheek—"my dear Georgy, tell me one thing—are you jealous?"

"Jealous, my dear! and jealous of *that* fellow—pshaw!"

"Well, then, give me leave, and you shall have the promise to-morrow."

* * * * *

To-morrow arrived. It was a remarkably fine day, and in the forenoon Mr. Perkins gave his accustomed knock at Scully's study, which was only separated from his own sitting-room by a double door. John had wisely followed his uncle's advice, and was on the best terms with the honourable Member.

"Here are a few sentences," said he, "which I think may suit your purpose. Great public services—undeniable merit—years of integrity—cause of reform, and Macabaw for ever!" He put down the paper. It was, in fact, a speech in favour of Mr. Macabaw.

"Hush," said Scully, rather surlily: for he was thinking how disagreeable it was to support Macabaw; and, besides, there were clerks in the room, whom the thoughtless Perkins had not at first perceived. As soon as that gentleman saw them, "You are busy, I see," continued he in a lower tone. "I came to say that I must be off duty to-day, for I am engaged to take a walk with some ladies of my acquaintance."

So saying, the light-hearted young man placed his hat unceremoniously on his head, and went off through his own door, humming a song. He was in such high spirits that

he did not even think of closing the doors of communication, and Scully looked after him with a sneer.

"Ladies, forsooth!" thought he. "I know who they are. This precious girl that he is fooling with, for one, I suppose." He was right: Perkins was off on the wings of love to see Miss Lucy; and she and Aunt Biggs and Uncle Crampton had promised this very day to come and look at the apartments which Mrs. John Perkins was to occupy with her happy husband.

"Poor devil," so continued Mr. Scully's meditations, "it is almost too bad to do him out of his place; but my Bob wants it, and John's girl has, I hear, seven thousand pounds. His uncle will get him another place before all that money is spent." And herewith Mr. Scully began conning the speech which Perkins had made for him.

He had not read it more than six times—in truth, he was getting it by heart—when his head clerk came to him from the front room, bearing a card: a footman had brought it, who said his lady was waiting below. Lady Gorgon's name was on the card! To seize his hat and rush downstairs was, with Mr. Scully, the work of an infinitesimal portion of time.

It was indeed Lady Gorgon, in her Gorgonian chariot.

"Mr. Scully," said she, popping her head out of window and smiling in a most engaging way, "I want to speak to you on something very particular *indeed*"—and she held him out her hand. Scully pressed it most tenderly: he hoped all heads in Bedford Row were at the windows to see him. "I can't ask you into the carriage, for you see the governess is with me, and I want to talk secrets to you."

"Shall I go and make a little promenade?" said mademoiselle innocently. And her mistress hated her for that speech.

"No. Mr. Scully, I am sure, will let me come in for five minutes?"

Mr. Scully was only too happy. My lady descended and walked upstairs, leaning on the happy solicitor's arm. But how should he manage? The front room was consecrated to clerks; there were clerks, too, as ill-luck would have it, in his private room. "Perkins is out for the day," thought Scully; "I will take her into his room." And into Perkins's

room he took her—ay, and he shut the double doors after him too, and trembled as he thought of his own happiness.

"What a charming little study!" said Lady Gorgon, seating herself. And indeed it was very pretty; for Perkins had furnished it beautifully, and laid out a neat tray with cakes, a cold fowl, and sherry, to entertain his party withal. "And do you bachelors always live so well?" continued she, pointing to the little cold collation.

Mr. Scully looked rather blank when he saw it, and a dreadful suspicion crossed his soul. But there was no need to trouble Lady Gorgon with explanations; therefore, at once, and with much presence of mind, he asked her to partake of his bachelor's fare (she would refuse Mr. Scully nothing that day). A pretty sight would it have been for young Perkins to see strangers so unceremoniously devouring his feast. She drank—Mr. Scully drank—and so emboldened was he by the draught that he actually seated himself by the side of Lady Gorgon, on John Perkins's new sofa.

Her ladyship had of course something to say to him. She was a pious woman, and had suddenly conceived a violent wish for building a chapel-of-ease at Oldborough, to which she entreated him to subscribe. She enlarged upon the benefits that the town would derive from it, spoke of Sunday schools, sweet spiritual instruction, and the duty of all well-minded persons to give aid to the scheme.

"I will subscribe a hundred pounds," said Scully, at the end of her ladyship's harangue: "would I not do anything for you?"

"Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Scully," said the enthusiastic woman. (How the "dear" went burning through his soul!) "Ah!" added she, "if you *would* but do anything for me—if you, who are so eminently, so truly distinguished, in a religious point of view, would but see the truth in politics too; and if I could see your name among those of the true patriot party in this empire, how blest—oh! how blest, should I be! Poor Sir George often says he should go to his grave happy, could he but see you the guardian of his boy; and I, your old friend (for we *were* friends, William), how have I wept to think of you as one of

those who are bringing our monarchy to ruin. Do, do promise me this too!" And she took his hand and pressed it between hers.

The heart of William Pitt Scully, during this speech, was thumping up and down with a frightful velocity and strength. His old love, the agency of the Gorgon property—the dear widow—five thousand a year clear—a thousand delicious hopes rushed madly through his brain, and almost took away his reason. And there she sat—she, the loved one, pressing his hand and looking softly into his eyes.

Down, down he plumped on his knees.

"Juliana!" shrieked he, "don't take away your hand! My love—my only love!—speak but those blessed words again! Call me William once more, and do with me what you will."

Juliana cast down her eyes, and said, in the very smallest type,—

"William!"

* * * * *

—when the door opened, and in walked Mr. Crampton, leading Mrs. Biggs, who could hardly contain herself for laughing, and Mr. John Perkins, who was squeezing the arm of Miss Lucy. They had heard every word of the two last speeches.

For at the very moment when Lady Gorgon had stopped at Mr. Scully's door, the four above-named individuals had issued from Great James Street into Bedford Row.

Lucy cried out that it was her aunt's carriage, and they all saw Mr. Scully come out, bareheaded, in the sunshine, and my lady descend, and the pair go into the house. They meanwhile entered by Mr. Perkins's own private door, and had been occupied in examining the delightful rooms on the ground-floor, which were to be his dining-room and library —from which they ascended a stair to visit the other two rooms, which were to form Mrs. John Perkins's drawing-room and bedroom. Now whether it was that they trod softly, or that the stairs were covered with a grand new carpet and drugget, as was the case, or that the party within were too much occupied in themselves to heed any outward disturbances, I know not; but Lucy, who was advancing with John

(he was saying something about one of the apartments, the rogue!)—Lucy suddenly started and whispered, "There is somebody in the rooms!" and at that instant began the speech already reported, "*Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Scully*," etc., etc., which was delivered by Lady Gorgon in a full, clear voice; for, to do her ladyship justice, *she* had not one single grain of love for Mr. Scully, and, during the delivery of her little oration, was as cool as the coolest cucumber.

Then began the impassioned rejoinder, to which the four listened on the landing-place; and then the little "*William*," as narrated above: at which juncture Mr. Crampton thought proper to rattle at the door, and, after a brief pause, to enter with his party.

"William" had had time to bounce off his knees, and was on a chair at the other end of the room.

"What, Lady Gorgon!" said Mr. Crampton, with excellent surprise; "how delighted I am to see you! Always, I see, employed in works of charity" (the chapel-of-ease paper was on her knees), "and on such an occasion, too—it is really the most wonderful coincidence! My dear madam, here is a silly fellow, a nephew of mine, who is going to marry a silly girl, a niece of your own."

"Sir, I——" began Lady Gorgon, rising.

"They heard every word," whispered Mr. Crampton eagerly. "Come forward, Mr. Perkins, and show yourself." Mr. Perkins made a genteel bow. "Miss Lucy, please to shake hands with your aunt; and this, my dear madam, is Mrs. Biggs of Mecklenburgh Square, who, if she were not too old, might marry a gentleman in the Treasury who is your very humble servant." And with this gallant speech, old Mr. Crampton began helping everybody to sherry and cake.

As for William Pitt Scully, he had disappeared, evaporated, in the most absurd, sneaking way imaginable. Lady Gorgon made good her retreat presently, with much dignity, her countenance undismayed, and her face turned resolutely to the foe.

* * * * *

About five days afterwards, that memorable contest took

place in the House of Commons, in which the partisans of Mr. Macabaw were so very nearly getting him the Speakership. On the day that the report of the debate appeared in *The Times*, there appeared also an announcement in *The Gazette* as follows :—

"The King has been pleased to appoint John Perkins, Esq., to be Deputy-Subcomptroller of his Majesty's Tape Office and Custos of the Sealing-Wax Department."

Mr. Crampton showed this to his nephew with great glee, and was chuckling to think how Mr. William Pitt Scully would be annoyed, who had expected the place, when Perkins burst out laughing and said, "By heavens, here is my own speech! Scully has spoken every word of it; he has only put in Mr. Pincher's name in the place of Mr. Macabaw's."

"He is ours now," responded his uncle, "and I told you *we would have him for nothing*. I told you, too, that you should be married from Sir George Gorgon's, and here is proof of it."

It was a letter from Lady Gorgon, in which she said that, "had she known Mr. Perkins to be a nephew of her friend Mr. Crampton, she never for a moment would have opposed his marriage with her niece; and she had written that morning to her dear Lucy, begging that the marriage breakfast should take place in Baker Street."

"It shall be in Mecklenburgh Square," said John Perkins stoutly, and in Mecklenburgh Square it was.

William Pitt Scully, Esq., was, as Mr. Crampton said, hugely annoyed at the loss of the place for his nephew. He had still, however, his hopes to look forward to; but these were unluckily dashed by the coming in of the Whigs. As for Sir George Gorgon, when he came to ask about his peerage, Hawksby told him that they could not afford to lose him in the Commons, for a Liberal Member would infallibly fill his place.

And now that the Tories are out and the Whigs are in, strange to say, a Liberal does fill his place. This Liberal is no other than Sir George Gorgon himself, who is still longing

to be a lord, and his lady is still devout and intriguing. So that the members for Oldborough have changed sides, and taunt each other with apostasy, and hate each other cordially. Mr. Crampton still chuckles over the manner in which he tricked them both, and talks of those five minutes during which he stood on the landing-place, and hatched and executed his "Bedford-Row Conspiracy."

END OF "THE BEDFORD-ROW CONSPIRACY."

A LITTLE DINNER AT TIMMINS'S

A LITTLE DINNER AT TIMMINS'S.

I.

MR. AND MRS. FITZROY TIMMINS live in Lilliput Street, that neat little street which runs at right angles with the Park and Brobdingnag Gardens. It is a very genteel neighbourhood, and I need not say they are of a good family.

Especially Mrs. Timmins, as her mamma is always telling Mr. T. They are Suffolk people, and distantly related to the Right Honourable the Earl of Bungay.

Besides his house in Lilliput Street, Mr. Timmins has chambers in Fig-tree Court, Temple, and goes the Northern Circuit.

The other day, when there was a slight difference about the payment of fees between the great Parliamentary Counsel and the Solicitors, Stoke and Pogis, of Great George Street, sent the papers of the Lough Foyle and Lough Corrib Junction Railway to Mr. Fitzroy Timmins, who was so elated that he instantly purchased a couple of looking-glasses for his drawing-rooms (the front room is 16 by 12, and the back, a tight but elegant apartment, 10 ft. 6 by 8 ft. 4), a coral for the baby, two new dresses for Mrs. Timmins, and a little rosewood desk, at the Pantechnicon, for which Rosa had long been sighing, with crumpled legs, emerald-green and gold morocco top, and drawers all over.

Mrs. Timmins is a very pretty poetess (her "Lines to a Faded Tulip" and her "Plaint of Plinlimmon" appeared in one of last year's Keepsakes); and Fitzroy, as he impressed

a kiss on the snowy forehead of his bride, pointed out to her, in one of the innumerable pockets of the desk, an elegant ruby-tipped pen, and six charming little gilt blank books, marked "My Books," which Mrs. Fitzroy might fill, he said (he is an Oxford man, and very polite), "with the delightful productions of her Muse." Besides these books, there was pink paper, paper with crimson edges, lace paper, all stamped with R. F. T. (Rosa Fitzroy Timmins) and the hand and battle-axe, the crest of the Timminses (and borne at Ascalon by Roaldus de Timmins, a crusader, who is now buried in the Temple Church, next to Serjeant Snooks), and yellow, pink, light-blue, and other scented sealing-waxes, at the service of Rosa when she chose to correspond with her friends.

Rosa, you may be sure, jumped with joy at the sight of this sweet present; called her Charles (his first name is Samuel, but they have sunk that) the best of men; embraced him a great number of times, to the edification of her buttony little page, who stood at the landing; and as soon as he was gone to chambers, took the new pen and a sweet sheet of paper, and began to compose a poem.

"What shall it be about?" was naturally her first thought. "What should be a young mother's first inspiration?" Her child lay on the sofa asleep before her, and she began in her neatest hand,—

"LINES

"ON MY SON, BUNGAY DE BRACY GASHLEIGH TYMMYNS, AGED TEN MONTHS.

"*Tuesday.*

"How beautiful! how beautiful thou seemest,
My boy, my precious one, my rosy babe!
Kind angels hover round thee, as thou dreamest;
Soft lashes hide thy beauteous azure eye which gleamest."

"Gleamest? thine eye which gleamest? Is that grammar?" thought Rosa, who had puzzled her little brains for some time with this absurd question, when the baby woke. Then the cook came up to ask about dinner; then Mrs. Fundy slipped over from No. 27 (they are opposite neighbours, and made an acquaintance through Mrs. Fundy's macaw); and a thousand things happened. Finally, there was no rhyme to babe except Tippoo Saib (against whom

Major Gashleigh, Rosa's grandfather, had distinguished himself), and so she gave up the little poem about her De Bracy.

Nevertheless, when Fitzroy returned from chambers to take a walk with his wife in the Park, as he peeped through the rich tapestry hanging which divided the two drawing-rooms, he found his dear girl still seated at the desk, and writing, writing away with her ruby pen as fast as it could scribble.

"What a genius that child has!" he said; "why, she is a second Mrs. Norton!" and advanced smiling to peep over her shoulder and see what pretty thing Rosa was composing.

It was not poetry, though, that she was writing, and Fitz read as follows:—

"LILLIPUT STREET, *Tuesday, 22nd May.*

"Mr. and Mrs. Fitzroy Tymmyns request the pleasure of Sir Thomas and Lady Kicklebury's company at dinner on Wednesday, at 7½ o'clock."

"My dear!" exclaimed the barrister, pulling a long face.

"Law, Fitzroy!" cried the beloved of his bosom, "how you do startle one!"

"Give a dinner-party with our means!" said he.

"Ain't you making a fortune, you miser?" Rosa said. "Fifteen guineas a day is four thousand five hundred a year; I've calculated it." And so saying, she rose, and taking hold of his whiskers (which are as fine as those of any man of his circuit), she put her mouth close up against his and did something to his long face which quite changed the expression of it, and which the little page heard outside the door.

"Our dining-room won't hold ten," he said.

"We'll only ask twenty, my love. Ten are sure to refuse in this season, when everybody is giving parties. Look, here is the list."

"Earl and Countess of Bungay, and Lady Barbara Saint Mary's."

"You are dying to get a lord into the house," Timmins said (*he* has not altered his name in Fig-tree Court yet, and therefore I am not so affected as to call him *Tymmyns*).

"Law, my dear, they are our cousins, and must be asked," Rosa said.

"Let us put down my sister and Tom Crowder, then."

"Blanche Crowder is really so *very* fat, Fitzroy," his wife said, "and our rooms are so *very* small."

Fitz laughed. "You little rogue," he said, "Lady Bungay weighs two of Blanche, even when she's not in the f——"

"Fiddlesticks!" Rose cried out. "Doctor Crowder really cannot be admitted; he makes such a noise eating his soup, that it is really quite disagreeable." And she imitated the gurgling noise performed by the doctor while inhausting his soup, in such a funny way, that Fitz saw inviting him was out of the question.

"Besides, we mustn't have too many relations," Rosa went on. "Mamma, of course, is coming. She doesn't like to be asked in the evening; and she'll bring her silver bread-basket and her candlesticks, which are very rich and handsome."

"And you complain of Blanche for being too stout!" groaned out Timmins.

"Well, well, don't be in a pet," said little Rosa. "The girls won't come to dinner, but will bring their music afterwards." And she went on with the list.

"Sir Thomas and Lady Kicklebury, 2. No saying no; we *must* ask them, Charles. They are rich people, and any room in their house in Brobdingnag Gardens would swallow up *our* humble cot. But to people in *our* position in *society* they will be glad enough to come. The city people are glad to mix with the old families."

"Very good," says Fitz, with a sad face of assent—and Mrs. Timmins went on reading her list.

"Mr. and Mrs. Topham Sawyer, Belgravine Place."

"Mrs. Sawyer hasn't asked you all the season. She gives herself the airs of an empress; and when——"

"One's Member, you know, my dear, one must have," Rosa replied, with much dignity, as if the presence of the representative of her native place would be a protection to her dinner. And a note was written and transported by the page early next morning to the mansion of the Sawyers in Belgravine Place.

The Topham Sawyers had just come down to breakfast—Mrs. T. in her large dust-coloured morning dress and Ma-

donna front (she looks rather scraggy of a morning, but I promise you her ringlets and figure will stun you of an evening); and having read the note, the following dialogue passed:—

Mrs. Topham Sawyer.—"Well, upon my word, I don't know where things will end. Mr. Sawyer, the Timminses have asked us to dinner."

Mr. Topham Sawyer.—"Ask us to dinner! What d—— impudence!"

Mrs. Topham Sawyer.—"The most dangerous and insolent revolutionary principles are abroad, Mr. Sawyer; and I shall write and hint as much to these persons."

Mr. Topham Sawyer.—"No, d—— it, Joanna; they are my constituents, and we must go. Write a civil note, and say we will come to their party." (*He resumes the perusal of "The Times," and Mrs. Topham Sawyer writes*)—

"MY DEAR ROSA,

"We shall have *great pleasure* in joining your little party. I do not reply in the third person, as *we are old friends*, you know, and *country neighbours*. I hope your mamma is well: present my *kindest remembrances* to her, and I hope we shall see much MORE of each other in the summer, when we go down to the Sawpits (for going abroad is out of the question in these *dreadful times*). With a hundred kisses to your dear little *pet*,

"Believe me your attached

"J. T. S."

She said *Pet*, because she did not know whether Rosa's child was a girl or boy; and Mrs. Timmins was very much pleased with the kind and gracious nature of the reply to her invitation.

II.

THE next persons whom little Mrs. Timmins was bent upon asking were Mr. and Mrs. John Rowdy, of the firm of Stumpy, Rowdy, and Co., of Brobdingnag Gardens, of the Prairie, Putney, and of Lombard Street, City.

Mrs. Timmins and Mrs. Rowdy had been brought up at the same school together, and there was always a little rivalry between them, from the day when they contended for the French prize at school to last week, when each had a stall at the Fancy Fair for the benefit of the Daughters of Decayed Muffin-men; and when Mrs. Timmins danced against Mrs. Rowdy in the Scythe Mazurka at the Polish Ball, headed by Mrs. Hugh Slasher. Rowdy took twenty-three pounds more than Timmins in the Muffin transaction (for she had possession of a kettle-holder worked by the hands of R-y-lty, which brought crowds to her stall); but in the Mazurka, Rosa conquered: she has the prettiest little foot possible (which in a red boot and silver heel looked so lovely that even the Chinese ambassador remarked it), whereas Mrs. Rowdy's foot is no trifle, as Lord Cornbury acknowledged when it came down on his lordship's boot-tip as they danced together amongst the Scythes.

"These people are ruining themselves," said Mrs. John Rowdy to her husband, on receiving the pink note. It was carried round by that rogue of a buttony page in the evening; and he walked to Brobdingnag Gardens, and in the Park afterwards, with a young lady who is kitchenmaid at 27, and who is not more than fourteen years older than little Buttons.

"These people are ruining themselves," said Mrs. John to her husband. "Rosa says she has asked the Bungays."

"Bungays indeed! Timmins was always a tuft-hunter," said Rowdy, who had been at college with the barrister, and who, for his own part, has no more objection to a lord than you or I have; and adding, "Hang him, what business has *he* to be giving parties?" allowed Mrs. Rowdy, nevertheless, to accept Rosa's invitation.

"When I go to business to-morrow, I will just have a look at Mr. Fitz's account," Mr. Rowdy thought; "and if it is overdrawn, as it usually is, why....." The announcement of Mrs. Rowdy's brougham here put an end to this agreeable train of thought; and the banker and his lady stepped into it to join a snug little family party of two-and-twenty, given by Mr. and Mrs. Secondchop at their great house on the other side of the Park.

"Rowdys 2, Bungays 3, ourselves and mamma 3, 2 Sawyers," calculated little Rosa.

"General Gulpin," Rosa continued, "eats a great deal, and is very stupid, but he looks well at table with his star and ribbon. Let us put *him* down!" and she noted down, "Sir Thomas and Lady Gulpin, 2; Lord Castlemouldy, 1."

"You will make your party abominably genteel and stupid," groaned Timmins. "Why don't you ask some of our old friends? Old Mrs. Portman has asked us twenty times, I am sure, within the last two years."

"And the last time we went there, there was pea-soup for dinner!" Mrs. Timmins said, with a look of ineffable scorn.

"Nobody can have been kinder than the Hodges have always been to us; and some sort of return we might make, I think."

"Return, indeed! A pretty sound it is on the staircase to hear "Mr. and Mrs. 'Odge and Miss 'Odges," pronounced by Billiter, who always leaves his *h*'s out. No, no; see attorneys at your chambers, my dear—but what could the poor creatures do in *our* society?" And so, one by one, Timmins's old friends were tried and eliminated by Mrs. Timmins, just as if she had been an Irish Attorney-General, and they so many Catholics on Mr. Mitchel's jury.

Mrs. Fitzroy insisted that the party should be of her very best company. Funnyman, the great wit, was asked, because of his jokes; and Mrs. Butt, on whom he practises; and Potter, who is asked because everybody else asks him; and Mr. Ranville Ranville of the Foreign Office, who might give some news of the Spanish squabble; and Botherby, who has suddenly sprung up into note because he is intimate with the French Revolution, and visits Ledru-Rollin and Lamartine. And these, with a couple more who are *amis de la maison*, made up the twenty, whom Mrs. Timmins thought she might safely invite to her little dinner.

But the deuce of it was, that when the answers to the invitations came back, everybody accepted! Here was a pretty quandary. How they were to get twenty into their dining-room was a calculation which poor Timmins could not solve at all; and he paced up and down the little room in dismay.

"Pooh!" said Rosa with a laugh. "Your sister Blanche looked very well in one of my dresses last year, and you know how stout she is. We will find some means to accommodate them all, depend upon it."

Mrs. John Rowdy's note to dear Rosa, accepting the latter's invitation, was a very gracious and kind one; and Mrs. Fitz showed it to her husband when he came back from chambers. But there was another note which had arrived for him by this time from Mr. Rowdy—or rather, from the firm; and to the effect that Mr. F. Timmins had overdrawn his account £28, 18s. 6d., and was requested to pay that sum to his obedient servants, Stumpy, Rowdy, and Co.

And Timmins did not like to tell his wife that the contending parties in the Lough Foyle and Lough Corrib Railroad had come to a settlement, and that the fifteen guineas a day had consequently determined. "I have had seven days of it, though," he thought, "and that will be enough to pay for the desk, the dinner, and the glasses, and make all right with Stumpy and Rowdy."

III.

THE cards for dinner having been issued, it became the duty of Mrs. Timmins to make further arrangements respecting the invitations to the tea-party which was to follow the more substantial meal.

These arrangements are difficult, as any lady knows who is in the habit of entertaining her friends. There are—

People who are offended if you ask them to tea whilst others have been asked to dinner.

People who are offended if you ask them to tea at all; and cry out furiously, "Good heavens! Jane, my love, why do these Timminses suppose that I am to leave my dinner-table to attend their —— soirée?" (the dear reader may fill up the —— to any strength, according to his liking)—or, "Upon my word, William, my dear, it is too much to ask us to pay twelve shillings for a brougham, and to spend I don't know how much in gloves, just to make our curtsies in Mrs.

Timmins's little drawing-room." Mrs. Moser made the latter remark about the Timmins affair, while the former was uttered by Mr. Grumpley, barrister-at-law, to his lady in Gloucester Place.

That there are people who are offended if you don't ask them at all, is a point which I suppose nobody will question. Timmins's earliest friend in life was Simmins, whose wife and family have taken a cottage at Mortlake for the season.

"We can't ask them to come out of the country," Rosa said to her Fitzroy—(between ourselves, she was delighted that Mrs. Simmins was out of the way, and was as jealous of her as every well-regulated woman should be of her husband's female friends)—"we can't ask them to come so far for the evening."

"Why, no, certainly," said Fitzroy, who has himself no very great opinion of a tea-party; and so the Simminses were cut out of the list.

And what was the consequence? The consequence was, that Simmins and Timmins cut when they met at Westminster; that Mrs. Simmins sent back all the books which she had borrowed from Rosa, with a withering note of thanks; that Rosa goes about saying that Mrs. Simmins squints; that Mrs. S., on her side, declares that Rosa is crooked, and behaved shamefully to Captain Hicks in marrying Fitzroy over him, though she was forced to do it by her mother, and prefers the Captain to her husband to this day. If, in a word, these two men could be made to fight, I believe their wives would not be displeased; and the reason of all this misery, rage, and dissension lies in a poor little twopenny dinner-party in Lilliput Street.

Well, the guests, both for before and after meat, having been asked, old Mrs. Gashleigh, Rosa's mother—(and, by consequence, Fitzroy's *dear* mother-in-law, though I promise you that "dear" is particularly sarcastic)—Mrs. Gashleigh, of course, was sent for, and came with Miss Eliza Gashleigh, who plays on the guitar, and Emily, who limps a little, but plays sweetly on the concertina. They live close by—trust them for that. Your mother-in-law is always within hearing—thank our stars for the attention of the dear women. The

Gashleighs, I say, live close by, and came early on the morning after Rosa's notes had been issued for the dinner.

When Fitzroy, who was in his little study, which opens into his little dining-room—one of those absurd little rooms which ought to be called a gentleman's pantry, and is scarcely bigger than a shower-bath, or a state cabin in a ship—when Fitzroy heard his mother-in-law's knock, and her well-known scuffling and chattering in the passage—in which she squeezed up young Buttons, the page, while she put questions to him regarding baby, and the cook's health, and whether she had taken what Mrs. Gashleigh had sent overnight, and the housemaid's health, and whether Mr. Timmins had gone to chambers or not—and when, after this preliminary chatter, Buttons flung open the door, announcing, "Mrs. Gashleigh and the young ladies," Fitzroy laid down his *Times* newspaper with an expression that had best not be printed here, and took his hat and walked away.

Mrs. Gashleigh has never liked him since he left off calling her mamma, and kissing her. But he said he could not stand it any longer—he was hanged if he would. So he went away to chambers, leaving the field clear to Rosa, mamma, and the two dear girls.

—Or to one of them, rather; for before leaving the house, he thought he would have a look at little Fitzroy upstairs in the nursery, and he found the child in the hands of his maternal aunt Eliza, who was holding him and pinching him as if he had been her guitar, I suppose, so that the little fellow bawled pitifully—and his father finally quitted the premises.

No sooner was he gone, although the party was still a fortnight off, than the women pounced upon his little study, and began to put it in order. Some of his papers they pushed up over the bookcase, some they put behind the Encyclopædia, some they crammed into the drawers—where Mrs. Gashleigh found three cigars, which she pocketed, and some letters, over which she cast her eye; and by Fitz's return they had the room as neat as possible, and the best glass and dessert service mustered on the study table.

It was a very neat and handsome service, as you may be sure Mrs. Gashleigh thought, whose rich uncle had purchased

it for the young couple at Spode and Copeland's; but it was only for twelve persons.

It was agreed that it would be in all respects cheaper and better to purchase a dozen more dessert-plates; and with "my silver basket in the centre," Mrs. G. said (she is always bragging about that confounded bread-basket), "we need not have any extra china dishes, and the table will look very pretty."

On making a roll-call of the glass, it was calculated that at least a dozen or so tumblers, four or five dozen wines, eight water-bottles, and a proper quantity of ice-plates, were requisite; and that as they would always be useful, it would be best to purchase the articles immediately. Fitz tumbled over the basket containing them, which stood in the hall, as he came in from chambers, and over the boy who had brought them—and the little bill.

The women had had a long debate, and something like a quarrel, it must be owned, over the bill of fare. Mrs. Gashleigh, who had lived a great part of her life in Devonshire, and kept house in great state there, was famous for making some dishes, without which she thought no dinner could be perfect. When she proposed her mock-turtle, and stewed pigeons, and gooseberry-cream, Rosa turned up her nose—a pretty little nose it was, by the way, and with a natural turn in that direction.

"Mock-turtle in June, mamma?" said she.

"It was good enough for your grandfather, Rosa," the mamma replied; "it was good enough for the Lord High Admiral when he was at Plymouth; it was good enough for the first men in the county, and relished by Lord Fortyskewer and Lord Rolls; Sir Lawrence Porker ate twice of it after Exeter Races; and I think it might be good enough for——"

"I will *not* have it, mamma!" said Rosa, with a stamp of her foot; and Mrs. Gashleigh knew what resolution there was in that. Once, when she had tried to physic the baby, there had been a similar fight between them.

So Mrs. Gashleigh made out a *carte*, in which the soup was left with a dash—a melancholy vacuum—and in which the pigeons were certainly thrust in amongst the *entrées*; but Rosa determined they never should make an *entrée* at all

into *her* dinner-party, but that she would have the dinner her own way.

When Fitz returned, then, and after he had paid the little bill of £6, 14s. 6d. for the glass, Rosa flew to him with her sweetest smiles, and the baby in her arms. And after she had made him remark how the child grew every day more and more like him, and after she had treated him to a number of compliments and caresses, which it were positively fulsome to exhibit in public, and after she had soothed him into good-humour by her artless tenderness, she began to speak to him about some little points which she had at heart.

She pointed out with a sigh how shabby the old curtains looked since the dear new glasses which her darling Fitz had given her had been put up in the drawing-room. Muslin curtains cost nothing, and she must and would have them.

The muslin curtains were accorded. She and Fitz went and bought them at Shoolbred's, when you may be sure she treated herself likewise to a neat, sweet, pretty half-mourning (for the Court, you know, is in mourning)—a neat, sweet barège, or calimanco, or bombazine, or tiffany, or some such thing; but Madame Camille of Regent Street made it up, and Rosa looked like an angel in it on the night of her little dinner.

"And, my sweet," she continued, after the curtains had been accorded, "mamma and I have been talking about the dinner. She wants to make it very expensive, which I cannot allow. I have been thinking of a delightful and economical plan, and you, my sweetest Fitz, must put it into execution."

"I have cooked a mutton-chop when I was in chambers," Fitz said with a laugh. "Am I to put on a cap and an apron?"

"No; but you are to go to the 'Megatherium Club' (where, you wretch, you are always going without my leave), and you are to beg Monsieur Mirobolant, your famous cook, to send you one of his best aides-de-camp, as I know he will, and with his aid we can dress the dinner and the confectionery at home for *almost nothing*, and we can show those purse-proud Topham Sawyers and Rowdys that the *humble*

cottage can furnish forth an elegant entertainment as well as the gilded halls of wealth."

Fitz agreed to speak to Monsieur Mirobolant. If Rosa had had a fancy for the cook of the Prime Minister, I believe the deluded creature of a husband would have asked Lord John for the loan of him.

IV.

FITZROY TIMMINS, whose taste for wine is remarkable for so young a man, is a member of the committee of the "Megatherium Club," and the great Mirobolant, good-natured as all great men are, was only too happy to oblige him. A young friend and *protégé* of his, of considerable merit, M. Cavalcadour, happened to be disengaged through the lamented death of Lord Hauncher, with whom young Cavalcadour had made his *début* as an artist. He had nothing to refuse to his master, Mirobolant, and would impress himself to be useful to a *gourmet* so distinguished as Monsieur Timmins. Fitz went away as pleased as Punch with this encomium of the great Mirobolant, and was one of those who voted against the decreasing of Mirobolant's salary when the measure was proposed by Mr. Parings, Colonel Close, and the Screw party in the committee of the club.

Faithful to the promise of his great master, the youthful Cavalcadour called in Lilliput Street the next day. A rich crimson velvet waistcoat, with buttons of blue glass and gold, a variegated blue satin stock, over which a graceful mosaic chain hung in glittering folds, a white hat worn on one side of his long curling ringlets, redolent with the most delightful hair-oil—one of those white hats which looks as if it had been just skinned—and a pair of gloves not exactly of the colour of *beurre frais*, but of *beurre* that has been up the chimney, with a natty cane with a gilt knob, completed the upper part, at any rate, of the costume of the young fellow whom the page introduced to Mrs. Timmins.

Her mamma and she had been just having a dispute about the gooseberry-cream when Cavalcadour arrived. His presence silenced Mrs. Gashleigh; and Rosa, in carrying on a

conversation with him in the French language—which she had acquired perfectly in an elegant finishing establishment in Kensington Square—had a great advantage over her mother, who could only pursue the dialogue with very much difficulty, eyeing one or other interlocutor with an alarmed and suspicious look, and gasping out "We" whenever she thought a proper opportunity arose for the use of that affirmative.

"I have two leetl menus weez me," said Cavalcadour to Mrs. Gashleigh.

"Minews—yes—oh, indeed?" answered the lady.

"Two little cartes."

"Oh, two carts! Oh, we," she said. "Coming, I suppose?" And she looked out of the window to see if they were there.

Cavalcadour smiled. He produced from a pocket-book a pink paper and a blue paper, on which he had written two bills of fare—the last two which he had composed for the lamented Hauncher—and he handed these over to Mrs. Fitzroy.

The poor little woman was dreadfully puzzled with these documents (she has them in her possession still), and began to read from the pink one as follows:—

"DÎNER POUR 16 PERSONNES.

Potage (clair) à la Rigodon.
Do. à la Prince de Tombuctou.

Deux Poissons.

Saumon de Severne à la Boadicée.
Rougets Gratinés à la Cléopatre.

Deux Relevés.

Le Chapeau-à-trois-cornes farci à la Robespierre.
Le Tire-botte à l'Odalisque.

Six Entrées.

Sauté de Hannetons à l'Epinglière.
Côtelettes à la Megatherium.
Bourrasque de Veau à la Palsambleu.
Laitances de Carpe en goguette à la Reine Pomare.
Turban de Volaille à l'Archevêque de Cantorbéry."

And so on with the *entremets*, and *hors-d'œuvres*, and the *rôtis*, and the *relevés*.

"Madame will see that the dinners are quite simple," said M. Cavalcadour.

"Oh, quite!" said Rosa, dreadfully puzzled.

"Which would Madame like?"

"Which would we like, mamma?" Rosa asked; adding, as if after a little thought, "I think, sir, we should prefer the blue one." At which Mrs. Gashleigh nodded as knowingly as she could; though pink or blue, I defy anybody to know what these cooks mean by their jargon.

"If you please, Madame, we will go down below and examine the scene of operations," Monsieur Cavalcadour said; and so he was marshalled down the stairs to the kitchen, which he didn't like to name, and appeared before the cook in all his splendour.

He cast a rapid glance round the premises, and a smile of something like contempt lighted up his features. "Will you bring pen and ink, if you please, and I will write down a few of the articles which will be necessary for us. We shall require, if you please, eight more stewpans, a couple of braising-pans, eight sauté-pans, six bainmarie-pans, a freezing-pot with accessories, and a few more articles of which I will inscribe the names." And M. Cavalcadour did so, dashing down, with the rapidity of genius, a tremendous list of ironmongery goods, which he handed over to Mrs. Timmins. She and her mamma were quite frightened by the awful catalogue.

"I will call three days hence and superintend the progress of matters, and we will make the stock for the soup the day before the dinner."

"Don't you think, sir," here interposed Mrs. Gashleigh, "that one soup—a fine rich mock-turtle, such as I have seen in the best houses in the west of England, and such as the late Lord Fortyskewer——"

"You will get what is wanted for the soups, if you please," M. Cavalcadour continued, not heeding this interruption, and as bold as a captain on his own quarter-deck: "for the stock of clear soup, you will get a leg of beef, a leg of veal, and a ham."

"We, munseer," said the cook, dropping a terrified curtsey: "a leg of beef, a leg of veal, and a ham."

"You can't serve a leg of veal at a party," said Mrs. Gashleigh; "and a leg of beef is not a company dish."

"Madame, they are to make the stock of the clear soup," M. Cavalcadour said.

"*What!*" cried Mrs. Gashleigh; and the cook repeated his former expression.

"Never, whilst *I* am in this house," cried out Mrs. Gashleigh indignantly; "never in a Christian *English* household; never shall such sinful waste be permitted by *me*. If you wish me to dine, Rosa, you must get a dinner less *expensive*. The Right Honourable Lord Fortyskewer could dine, sir, without these wicked luxuries, and I presume my daughter's guests can."

"Madame is perfectly at liberty to decide," said M. Cavalcadour. "I came to oblige Madame and my good friend Mirobolant, not myself."

"Thank you, sir; I think it *will* be too expensive," Rosa stammered in a great flutter. "But I am very much obliged to you."

"Il n'y a point d'obligation, Madame," said Monsieur Alcide Camille Cavalcadour in his most superb manner; and, making a splendid bow to the lady of the house, was respectfully conducted to the upper regions by little Buttons, leaving Rosa frightened, the cook amazed and silent, and Mrs. Gashleigh boiling with indignation against the dresser.

Up to that moment, Mrs. Blowser, the cook, who had come out of Devonshire with Mrs. Gashleigh (of course that lady garrisoned her daughter's house with servants, and expected them to give her information of everything which took place there)—up to that moment, I say, the cook had been quite contented with that subterraneous station which she occupied in life, and had a pride in keeping her kitchen neat, bright, and clean. It was, in her opinion, the comfortablest room in the house (we all thought so when we came down of a night to smoke there), and the handsomest kitchen in Lilliput Street.

But after the visit of Cavalcadour, the cook became quite discontented and uneasy in her mind. She talked in a melancholy manner over the area railings to the cooks at twenty-three and twenty-five. She stepped over the way,

and conferred with the cook there. She made inquiries at the baker's, and at other places, about the kitchens in the great houses in Brobdingnag Gardens, and how many spits, bangmarry-pans, and stoo-pans they had. She thought she could not do with an occasional help, but must have a kitchen-maid. And she was often discovered by a gentleman of the police force, who was, I believe, her cousin, and occasionally visited her when Mrs. Gashleigh was not in the house or spying it—she was discovered seated with *Mrs. Rundell* in her lap, its leaves bespattered with her tears. "My pease be gone, Pelisse," she said, "zins I zaw that ther Franchman!" And it was all the faithful fellow could do to console her.

"—— the dinner!" said Timmins, in a rage at last. "Having it cooked in the house is out of the question. The bother of it, and the row your mother makes, are enough to drive one mad. It won't happen again, I can promise you, Rosa. Order it at Fubsby's, at once. You can have everything at Fubsby's—from footmen to saltspoons. Let's go and order it at Fubsby's."

"Darling, if you don't mind the expense, and it will be any relief to you, let us do as you wish," Rosa said; and she put on her bonnet, and they went off to the grand cook and confectioner of the Brobdingnag quarter.

V.

On the arm of her Fitzroy, Rosa went off to Fubsby's, that magnificent shop at the corner of Parliament Place and Alicompayne Square—a shop into which the rogue had often cast a glance of approbation as he passed; for there are not only the most wonderful and delicious cakes and confections in the window, but at the counter there are almost sure to be three or four of the prettiest women in the whole of this world, with little darling caps of the last French make, with beautiful wavy hair, and the neatest possible waists and aprons.

Yes, there they sit; and others, perhaps, besides Fitz have cast a sheep's-eye through those enormous plate-glass window-

panes. I suppose it is the fact of perpetually living among such a quantity of good things that makes those young ladies so beautiful. They come into the place, let us say, like ordinary people, and gradually grow handsomer and handsomer, until they grow out into the perfect angels you see. It can't be otherwise: if you and I, my dear fellow, were to have a course of that place, we should become beautiful too. They live in an atmosphere of the most delicious pine-apples, blanc-manges, creams (some whipt, and some so good that of course they don't want whipping), jellies, tipsy-cakes, cherry-brandy — one hundred thousand sweet and lovely things. Look at the preserved fruits, look at the golden ginger, the outspreading ananas, the darling little rogues of China oranges, ranged in the gleaming crystal cylinders. *Mon Dieu!* Look at the strawberries in the leaves. Each of them is as large nearly as a lady's reticule, and looks as if it had been brought up in a nursery to itself. One of those strawberries is a meal for those young ladies behind the counter: they nibble off a little from the side; and if they are very hungry, which can scarcely ever happen, they are allowed to go to the crystal canisters and take out a rout-cake or macaroon. In the evening they sit and tell each other little riddles out of the bonbons; and when they wish to amuse themselves, they read the most delightful remarks, in the French language, about Love, and Cupid, and Beauty, before they place them inside the crackers. They always are writing down good things into Mr. Fubsby's ledgers. It must be a perfect feast to read them. Talk of the Garden of Eden! I believe it was nothing to Mr. Fubsby's house; and I have no doubt that after those young ladies have been there a certain time, they get to such a pitch of loveliness at last, that they become complete angels, with wings sprouting out of their lovely shoulders, when (after giving just a preparatory balance or two) they fly up to the counter and perch there for a minute, hop down again, and affectionately kiss the other young ladies, and say, "Good-bye, dears! We shall meet again *là haut*." And then, with a whirr of their deliciously-scented wings, away they fly for good, whisking over the trees of Brobdingnag Square, and up into the sky, as the policeman touches his hat.

It is up there that they invent the legends for the crackers, and the wonderful riddles and remarks on the bonbons. No mortal, I am sure, could write them.

I never saw a man in such a state as Fitzroy Timmins in the presence of those ravishing houris. Mrs. Fitz having explained that they required a dinner for twenty persons, the chief young lady asked what Mr. and Mrs. Fitz would like, and named a thousand things, each better than the other, to all of which Fitz instantly said yes. The wretch was in such a state of infatuation that I believe if that lady had proposed to him a fricasseed elephant, or a boa-constrictor in jelly, he would have said, "Oh, yes, certainly; put it down."

That Peri wrote down in her album a list of things which it would make your mouth water to listen to. But she took it all quite calmly. Heaven bless you! *they* don't care about things that are no delicacies to them. But whatever she chose to write down, Fitzroy let her.

After the dinner and dessert were ordered (at Fubsby's they furnish everything—dinner and dessert, plate and china, servants in your own livery, and, if you please, guests of title too), the married couple retreated from that shop of wonders, Rosa delighted that the trouble of the dinner was all off their hands; but she was afraid it would be rather expensive.

"Nothing can be too expensive which pleases *you*, dear," Fitz said.

"By the way, one of those young women was rather good-looking," Rosa remarked—"the one in the cap with the blue ribbons." (And she cast about the shape of the cap in her mind, and determined to have exactly such another.)

"Think so? I didn't observe," said the miserable hypocrite by her side; and when he had seen Rosa home, he went back, like an infamous fiend, to order something else which he had forgotten, he said, at Fubsby's. Get out of that paradise, you cowardly, creeping, vile serpent you!

Until the day of the dinner the infatuated fop was *always* going to Fubsby's. *He was remarked there.* He used to go before he went to chambers in the morning, and sometimes on his return from the Temple. But the morning was the time which he preferred; and one day, when he went on one of his eternal pretexts, and was chattering and flirting at the

counter, a lady who had been reading yesterday's paper, and eating a halfpenny bun for an hour in the back shop (if that paradise may be called a shop)—a lady stepped forward, laid down the *Morning Herald*, and confronted him.

That lady was Mrs. Gashleigh. From that day the miserable Fitzroy was in her power, and she resumed a sway over his house, to shake off which had been the object of his life and the result of many battles. And for a mere freak (for, on going into Fubsby's a week afterwards, he found the Peris drinking tea out of blue cups, and eating stale bread and butter, when his absurd passion instantly vanished)—I say, for a mere freak, the most intolerable burden of his life was put on his shoulders again—his mother-in-law.

On the day before the little dinner took place—and I promise you we shall come to it in the very next chapter—a tall and elegant middle-aged gentleman, who might have passed for an earl but that there was a slight incompleteness about his hands and feet, the former being uncommonly red, and the latter large and irregular, was introduced to Mrs. Timmins by the page, who announced him as Mr. Truncheon.

"I'm Truncheon, Ma'am," he said, with a low bow.

"Indeed!" said Rosa.

"About the dinner, M'm, from Fubsby's, M'm. As you have no butler, M'm, I presume you will wish me to act as sich. I shall bring two persons as haids to-morrow; both answers to the name of John. I'd best, if you please, inspect the premisis, and will thank you to allow your young man to show me the pantry and kitching."

Truncheon spoke in a low voice, and with the deepest and most respectful melancholy. There is not much expression in his eyes, but from what there is, you would fancy that he was oppressed by a secret sorrow. Rosa trembled as she surveyed this gentleman's size, his splendid appearance, and gravity. "I am sure," she said, "I never shall dare to ask him to hand a glass of water." Even Mrs. Gashleigh, when she came on the morning of the actual dinner-party, to superintend matters, was cowed, and retreated from the kitchen before the calm majesty of Truncheon.

And yet that great man was, like all the truly great—affable.

He put aside his coat and waistcoat (both of evening cut, and looking prematurely splendid as he walked the streets in noon-day), and did not disdain to rub the glasses and polish the decanters, and to show young Buttons the proper mode of preparing these articles for a dinner. And while he operated, the maids, and Buttons, and cook, when she could—and what had she but the vegetables to boil?—crowded round him, and listened with wonder as he talked of the great families as he had lived with. That man, as they saw him there before them, had been cab-boy to Lord Tantallan, valet to the Earl of Bareacres, and groom of the chambers to the Duchess Dowager of Fitzbattleaxe. Oh, it was delightful to hear Mr. Truncheon!

VI.

On the great, momentous, stupendous day of the dinner, my beloved female reader may imagine that Fitzroy Timmins was sent about his business at an early hour in the morning, while the women began to make preparations to receive their guests. "There will be no need of your going to Fubsby's," Mrs. Gashleigh said to him, with a look that drove him out of doors. "Everything that we require has been ordered *there!* You will please to be back here at six o'clock, and not sooner; and I presume you will acquiesce in my arrangements about the *wine?*"

"Oh, yes, mamma," said the prostrate son-in-law.

"In so large a party—a party beyond some folks' *means*—expensive *wines* are *absurd.* The light sherry at 26s., the champagne at 42s.; and you are not to go beyond 36s. for the claret and port after dinner. Mind, coffee will be served; and you come upstairs after two rounds of the claret."

"Of course, of course," acquiesced the wretch, and hurried out of the house to his chambers, and to discharge the commissions with which the womankind had entrusted him.

As for Mrs. Gashleigh, you might have heard her bawling over the house the whole day long. That admirable woman was everywhere: in the kitchen until the arrival of Truncheon, before whom she would not retreat without a battle; on the stairs; in Fitzroy's dressing-room; and in Fitzroy minor's

nursery, to whom she gave a dose of her own composition, while the nurse was sent out on a pretext to make purchases of garnish for the dishes to be served for the little dinner. Garnish for the dishes! As if the folks at Fubsby's could not garnish dishes better than Gashleigh, with her stupid old-world devices of laurel-leaves, parsley, and cut turnips! Why, there was not a dish served that day that was not covered over with skewers, on which truffles, crayfish, mushrooms, and forced-meat were impaled. When old Gashleigh went down with her barbarian bunches of holly and greens to stick about the meats, even the cook saw their incongruity, and, at Truncheon's orders, flung the whole shrubbery into the dust-house, where, while poking about the premises, you may be sure Mrs. G. saw it.

Every candle which was to be burned that night (including the tallow candle which she said was a good enough bed-light for Fitzroy) she stuck into the candlesticks with her own hands, giving her own high-shouldered plated candlesticks of the year 1798 the place of honour. She upset all poor Rosa's floral arrangements, turning the nosegays from one vase into the other without any pity; and was never tired of beating, and pushing, and patting, and *whapping* the curtain and sofa draperies into shape in the little drawing-room.

In Fitz's own apartments she revelled with peculiar pleasure. It has been described how she had sacked his study and pushed away his papers, some of which, including three cigars, and the commencement of an article for the *Law Magazine*, "Lives of the Sheriffs' Officers," he has never been able to find to this day. Mamma now went into the little room in the back regions, which is Fitz's dressing-room (and was destined to be a cloak-room), and here she rummaged to her heart's delight.

In an incredibly short space of time she examined all his outlying pockets, drawers, and letters; she inspected his socks and handkerchiefs in the top drawers; and on the dressing-table, his razors, shaving-strop, and hair-oil. She carried off his silver-topped scent-bottle out of his dressing-case, and a half-dozen of his favourite pills (which Fitz possesses in common with every well-regulated man), and probably administered them to her own family. His boots, glossy

pumps, and slippers, she pushed into the shower-bath, where the poor fellow stepped into them the next morning, in the midst of a pool in which they were lying. The baby was found sucking his boot-hooks the next day in the nursery; and as for the bottle of varnish for his shoes (which he generally paints upon the trees himself, having a pretty taste in that way), it could never be found to the present hour. But it was remarked that the young Master Gashleighs, when they came home for the holidays, always wore lacquered highlows; and the reader may draw his conclusions from *that* fact.

In the course of the day all the servants gave Mrs. Timmins warning.

The cook said she coodn't abear it no longer, 'aving Mrs. G. always about her kitching, with her fingers in all the saucepans. Mrs. G. had got her the place, but she preferred one as Mrs. G. didn't get for her.

The nurse said she was come to nuss Master Fitzroy, and knew her duty; his grandmamma wasn't his nuss, and was always aggrawating her—missus must shoot herself elsewhere.

The housemaid gave utterance to the same sentiments in language more violent.

Little Buttons bounced up to his mistress, said he was butler of the family, Mrs. G. was always poking about his pantry, and damn if he'd stand it.

At every moment Rosa grew more and more bewildered. The baby howled a great deal during the day. His large china christening-bowl was cracked by Mrs. Gashleigh altering the flowers in it, and pretending to be very cool, whilst her hands shook with rage.

"Pray go on, mamma," Rosa said, with tears in her eyes. "Should you like to break the chandelier?"

"Ungrateful, unnatural child!" bellowed the other. "Only that I know you couldn't do without me, I'd leave the house this minute."

"As you wish," said Rosa; but Mrs. G. *didn't* wish, and in this juncture Truncheon arrived.

That officer surveyed the dining-room, laid the cloth there with admirable precision and neatness; ranged the plate on the sideboard with graceful accuracy, but objected to that

old thing in the centre, as he called Mrs. Gashleigh's silver basket, as cumbrous and useless for the table, where they would want all the room they could get.

Order was not restored to the house, nor, indeed, any decent progress made, until this great man came; but where there was a revolt before, and a general disposition to strike work and to yell out defiance against Mrs. Gashleigh, who was sitting bewildered and furious in the drawing-room—where there was before commotion, at the appearance of the master-spirit all was peace and unanimity: the cook went back to her pans; the housemaid busied herself with the china and glass, cleaning some articles and breaking others; Buttons sprang up and down the stairs, obedient to the orders of his chief; and all things went well and in their season.

At six, the man with the wine came from Binney and Latham's. At a quarter-past six, Timmins himself arrived.

At half-past six, he might have been heard shouting out for his varnished boots—but we know where *those* had been hidden—and for his dressing things; but Mrs. Gashleigh had put them away.

As in his vain inquiries for these articles he stood shouting, "Nurse! Buttons! Rosa, my dear!" and the most fearful execrations up and down the stairs, Mr. Truncheon came out on him.

"Igscuse me, sir," says he, "but it's impawsable. We can't dine twenty at that table—not if we set 'em out awinder, we can't."

"What's to be done?" asked Fitzroy, in an agony; "they've all said they'd come."

"Can't do it," said the other; "with two top and bottom—and your table is as narrow as a bench—we can't hold more than heighteen, and then each person's helbows will be into his neighbour's cheer."

"Rosa! Mrs. Gashleigh!" cried out Timmins, "come down and speak to this gentl——this——"

"Truncheon, sir," said the man.

The women descended from the drawing-room. "Look and see, ladies," he said, inducting them into the dining-room; "there's the room, there's the table laid for heighteen, and I defy you to squeege in more."

"One person in a party always fails," said Mrs. Gashleigh, getting alarmed.

"That's nineteen," Mr. Truncheon remarked. "We must knock another hoff, Ma'am." And he looked her hard in the face.

Mrs. Gashleigh was very red and nervous, and paced, or rather squeezed round the table (it was as much as she could do). The chairs could not be put any closer than they were. It was impossible, unless the *convive* sat as a centre-piece in the middle, to put another guest at that table.

"Look at that lady movin' round, sir. You see now the difficklty. If my men wasn't thinner, they couldn't hoperate at all," Mr. Truncheon observed, who seemed to have a spite to Mrs. Gashleigh.

"What is to be done?" she said, with purple accents.

"My dearest mamma," Rosa cried out, "you must stop at home—how sorry I am!" And she shot one glance at Fitzroy, who shot another at the great Truncheon, who held down his eyes. "We could manage with heighteen," he said mildly.

Mrs. Gashleigh gave a hideous laugh.

* * * * *

She went away. At eight o'clock she was pacing at the corner of the street, and actually saw the company arrive. First came the Topham Sawyers, in their light-blue carriage with the white hammercloth and blue and white ribbons: their footmen drove the house down with the knocking.

Then followed the ponderous and snuff-coloured vehicle, with faded gilt wheels and brass earl's coronets all over it, the conveyance of the House of Bungay. The Countess of Bungay and daughter stepped out of the carriage. The fourteenth Earl of Bungay couldn't come.

Sir Thomas and Lady Gulpin's fly made its appearance, from which issued the General with his star, and Lady Gulpin in yellow satin. The Rowdys' brougham followed next; after which Mrs. Butt's handsome equipage drove up.

The two friends of the house, young gentlemen from the Temple, now arrived in cab No. 9996. We tossed up, in fact, which should pay the fare.

Mr. Ranville Ranville walked, and was dusting his boots

as the Templars drove up. Lord Castlemouldy came out of a twopenny omnibus. Funnyman, the wag, came last, whirling up rapidly in a hansom, just as Mrs. Gashleigh, with rage in her heart, was counting that two people had failed, and that there were only seventeen after all.

Mr. Truncheon passed our names to Mr. Billiter, who bawled them out on the stairs. Rosa was smiling in a pink dress, and looking as fresh as an angel, and received her company with that grace which has always characterized her.

The moment of the dinner arrived, old Lady Bungay scuffled off on the arm of Fitzroy, while the rear was brought up by Rosa and Lord Castlemouldy, of Ballyshanvanvoght Castle, Co. Tipperary. Some fellows who had the luck took down ladies to dinner. I was not sorry to be out of the way of Mrs. Rowdy, with her dandified airs, or of that high and mighty county princess, Mrs. Topham Sawyer.

VII.

Of course it does not become the present writer, who has partaken of the best entertainment which his friends could supply, to make fun of their (somewhat ostentatious, as it must be confessed) hospitality. If they gave a dinner beyond their means, it is no business of mine. I hate a man who goes and eats a friend's meat, and then blabs the secrets of the mahogany. Such a man deserves never to be asked to dinner again; and though at the close of a London season that seems no great loss, and you sicken of a whitebait as you would of a whale, yet we must always remember that there's another season coming, and hold our tongues for the present.

As for describing, then, the mere victuals on Timmins's table, that would be absurd. Everybody (I mean of the genteel world of course, of which I make no doubt the reader is a polite ornament)—everybody has the same everything in London. You see the same coats, the same dinners, the same boiled fowls and mutton, the same cutlets, fish, and cucumbers, the same lumps of Wenham Lake ice, etc. The waiters with white neckcloths are as like each other every-

where as the pease which they hand round with the ducks of the second course. Can't any one invent anything new?

The only difference between Timmins's dinner and his neighbour's was, that he had hired, as we have said, the greater part of the plate, and that his cowardly conscience magnified faults and disasters of which no one else probably took heed.

But Rosa thought, from the supercilious air with which Mrs. Topham Sawyer was eyeing the plate and other arrangements, that she was remarking the difference of the ciphers on the forks and spoons—(which had, in fact, been borrowed from every one of Fitzroy's friends: I know, for instance, that he had my six, among others, and only returned five, along with a battered old black-pronged plated abomination, which I have no doubt belongs to Mrs. Gashleigh, whom I hereby request to send back mine in exchange)—their guilty consciences, I say, made them fancy that every one was spying out their domestic deficiencies; whereas, it is probable that nobody present thought of their failings at all. People never do: they never see holes in their neighbours' coats—they are too indolent, simple, and charitable.

Some things, however, one could not help remarking: for instance, though Fitz is my closest friend, yet could I avoid seeing and being amused by his perplexity and his dismal efforts to be facetious? His eye wandered all round the little room with quick uneasy glances, very different from those frank and jovial looks with which he is accustomed to welcome you to a leg of mutton; and Rosa, from the other end of the table, and over the flowers, *entrée* dishes, and wine-coolers, telegraphed him with signals of corresponding alarm. Poor devils! why did they ever go beyond that leg of mutton?

Funnyman was not brilliant in conversation, scarcely opening his mouth, except for the purposes of feasting. The fact is, our friend Tom Dawson was at table, who knew all his stories, and in his presence the greatest wag is always silent and uneasy.

Fitz has a very pretty wit of his own, and a good reputation on circuit; but he is timid before great people. And indeed the presence of that awful Lady Bungay on his right hand was enough to damp him. She was in court mourning

(for the late Prince of Schlippenschloppen). She had on a large black funereal turban and appurtenances, and a vast breastplate of twinkling, twiddling black bugles. No wonder a man could not be gay in talking to *her*.

Mrs. Rowdy and Mrs. Topham Sawyer love each other as women do who have the same receiving nights, and ask the same society. They were only separated by Ranville Ranville, who tries to be well with both; and they talked at each other across him.

Topham and Rowdy growled out a conversation about Rum, Ireland, and the Navigation Laws, quite unfit for print. Sawyer never speaks three words without mentioning the House and the Speaker.

The Irish Peer said nothing (which was a comfort); but he ate and drank of everything which came in his way, and cut his usual absurd figure in dyed whiskers and a yellow under-waistcoat.

General Gulpin sported his star, and looked fat and florid, but melancholy. His wife ordered away his dinner, just like honest Sancho's physician at Barataria.

Botherby's stories about Lamartine are as old as the hills, since the barricades of 1848; and he could not get in a word or cut the slightest figure. And as for Tom Dawson, he was carrying on an undertoned small-talk with Lady Barbara St. Mary's, so that there was not much conversation worth record going on *within* the dining-room.

Outside, it was different. Those houses in Lilliput Street are so uncommonly compact that you can hear everything which takes place all over the tenement; and so—

In the awful pauses of the banquet, and the hall-door being furthermore open, we had the benefit of hearing:

The cook, and the occasional cook, belowstairs, exchanging rapid phrases regarding the dinner;

The smash of the soup-tureen, and swift descent of the kitchen-maid and soup-ladle down the stairs to the lower regions. This accident created a laugh, and rather amused Fitzroy and the company, and caused Funnyman to say, bowing to Rosa, that she was mistress of herself, though China fall. But she did not heed him, for at that moment another noise commenced—namely, that of—

The baby in the upper rooms, who commenced a series of piercing yells, which, though stopped by the sudden clapping-to of the nursery-door, were only more dreadful to the mother when suppressed. She would have given a guinea to go upstairs and have done with the whole entertainment.

A thundering knock came at the door very early after the dessert, and the poor soul took a speedy opportunity of summoning the ladies to depart, though you may be sure it was only old Mrs. Gashleigh, who had come with her daughters—of course the first person to come. I saw her red gown whisking up the stairs, which were covered with plates and dishes, over which she trampled.

Instead of having any quiet after the retreat of the ladies, the house was kept in a rattle, and the glasses jingled on the table as the flymen and coachmen plied the knocker, and the *soirée* came in. From my place I could see everything: the guests as they arrived (I remarked very few carriages, mostly cabs and flies), and a little crowd of blackguard boys and children, who were formed round the door, and gave ironical cheers to the folks as they stepped out of their vehicles.

As for the evening-party, if a crowd in the dog-days is pleasant, poor Mrs. Timmins certainly had a successful *soirée*. You could hardly move on the stair. Mrs. Sternhold broke in the banisters, and nearly fell through. There was such a noise and chatter you could not hear the singing of the Miss Gashleighs, which was no great loss. Lady Bungay could hardly get to her carriage, being entangled with Colonel Wedgewood in the passage. An absurd attempt was made to get up a dance of some kind; but before Mrs. Crowder had got round the room, the hanging lamp in the dining-room below was stove in, and fell with a crash on the table, now prepared for refreshment.

Why, in fact, did the Timminses give that party at all? It was quite beyond their means. They have offended a score of their old friends, and pleased none of their acquaintances. So angry were many who were not asked, that poor Rosa says she must now give a couple more parties and take in those not previously invited. And I know for a fact that Fubsby's bill is not yet paid; nor Binney and Latham's, the

wine-merchants; that the breakage and hire of glass and china cost ever so much money; that every true friend of Timmins has cried out against his absurd extravagance; and that now, when every one is going out of town, Fitz has hardly money to pay his circuit, much more to take Rosa to a watering-place, as he wished and promised.

As for Mrs. Gashleigh, the only feasible plan of economy which she can suggest, is that she should come and live with her daughter and son-in-law, and that they should keep house together. If he agrees to this, she has a little sum at the banker's, with which she would not mind easing his present difficulties; and the poor wretch is so utterly bewildered and crestfallen that it is very likely he will become her victim.

The Topham Sawyers, when they go down into the country, will represent Fitz as a ruined man and reckless prodigal; his uncle, the attorney, from whom he has expectations, will most likely withdraw his business, and adopt some other member of his family—Blanche Crowder, for instance, whose husband, the doctor, has had high words with poor Fitzroy already, of course at the women's instigation. And all these accumulated miseries fall upon the unfortunate wretch because he was good-natured, and his wife would have a Little Dinner.

END OF "A LITTLE DINNER AT TIMMINS'S."

E HISTORY OF SAMUEL TITMARSH

THE HISTORY OF
SAMUEL TITMARSH
AND
THE GREAT HOGGARTY DIAMOND.

CHAPTER I.

GIVES AN ACCOUNT OF OUR VILLAGE AND THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE DIAMOND.

WHEN I came up to town for my second year, my aunt Hoggarty made me a present of a diamond pin; that is to say, it was not a diamond-pin then, but a large old-fashioned locket, of Dublin manufacture in the year 1795, which the late Mr. Hoggarty used to sport at the Lord Lieutenant's balls and elsewhere. He wore it, he said, at the battle of Vinegar Hill, when his club pigtail saved his head from being taken off; but that is neither here nor there.

In the middle of the brooch was Hoggarty in the scarlet uniform of the corps of Fencibles to which he belonged; around it were thirteen locks of hair, belonging to a baker's dozen of sisters that the old gentleman had; and, as all these little ringlets partook of the family hue of brilliant auburn, Hoggarty's portrait seemed to the fanciful view like a great fat red round of beef surrounded by thirteen carrots. These were dished up on a plate of blue enamel, and it was from the GREAT HOGGARTY DIAMOND (as we called it in the family)

that the collection of hairs in question seemed as it were to spring.

My aunt, I need not say, is rich, and I thought I might be her heir as well as another. During my month's holiday she was particularly pleased with me; made me drink tea with her often (though there was a certain person in the village with whom on those golden summer evenings I should have liked to have taken a stroll in the hay-fields); promised every time I drank her bohea to do something handsome for me when I went back to town—nay, three or four times had me to dinner at three, and to whist or cribbage afterwards. I did not care for the cards—for though we always played seven hours on a stretch, and I always lost, my losings were never more than nineteenpence a night—but there was some infernal sour black-currant wine that the old lady always produced at dinner, and with the tray at ten o'clock, and which I dared not refuse, though upon my word and honour it made me very unwell.

Well, I thought after all this obsequiousness on my part, and my aunt's repeated promises, that the old lady would at least make me a present of a score of guineas (of which she had a power in the drawer); and so convinced was I that some such present was intended for me, that a young lady by the name of Miss Mary Smith, with whom I had conversed on the subject, actually netted me a little green silk purse, which she gave me (behind Hicks's hayrick, as you turn to the right up Churchyard Lane)—which she gave me, I say, wrapped up in a bit of silver paper. There was something in the purse, too, if the truth must be known. First, there was a thick curl of the glossiest, blackest hair you ever saw in your life; and next there was threepence—that is to say, the half of a silver sixpence hanging by a little necklace of blue ribbon. Ah, but I knew where the other half of the sixpence was, and envied that happy bit of silver!

The last day of my holiday I was obliged, of course, to devote to Mrs. Hoggarty. My aunt was excessively gracious, and by way of a treat brought out a couple of bottles of the black currant, of which she made me drink the greater part. At night, when all the ladies assembled at her party had gone off with their pattens and their maids, Mrs. Hoggarty, who

had made a signal to me to stay, first blew out three of the wax candles in the drawing-room, and taking the fourth in her hand went and unlocked her escritoire.

I can tell you my heart beat, though I pretended to look quite unconcerned.

"Sam, my dear," said she, as she was fumbling with her keys, "take another glass of Rosolio" (that was the name by which she baptized the cursed beverage); "it will do you good." I took it, and you might have seen my hand tremble as the bottle went click, click against the glass. By the time I had swallowed it, the old lady had finished her operations at the bureau, and was coming towards me, the wax candle bobbing in one hand, and a large parcel in the other.

"Now's the time," thought I.

"Samuel, my dear nephew," said she, "your first name you received from your sainted uncle, my blessed husband; and of all my nephews and nieces, you are the one whose conduct in life has most pleased me."

When you consider that my aunt herself was one of seven married sisters, that all the Hoggarties were married in Ireland and mothers of numerous children, I must say that the compliment my aunt paid me was a very handsome one.

"Dear aunt," says I, in a slow, agitated voice, "I have often heard you say there were seventy-three of us in all, and believe me I do think your high opinion of me very complimentary indeed. I'm unworthy of it; indeed I am."

"As for those odious Irish people," says my aunt, rather sharply, "don't speak of them; I hate them, and every one of their mothers" (the fact is, there had been a lawsuit about Hoggarty's property). "But of all my other kindred, you, Samuel, have been the most dutiful and affectionate to me. Your employers in London give the best accounts of your regularity and good conduct. Though you have had eighty pounds a year (a liberal salary), you have not spent a shilling more than your income, as other young men would; and you have devoted your month's holidays to your old aunt, who, I assure you, is grateful."

"Oh, ma'am!" said I. It was all that I could utter.

"Samuel," continued she, "I promised you a present, and here it is. I first thought of giving you money; but you are

a regular lad, and don't want it. You are above money, dear Samuel. I give you what I value most in life—the p—the po—the po-ortrait of my sainted Hoggarty" (*tears*), "set in the locket which contains the valuable diamond that you have often heard me speak of. Wear it, dear Sam, for my sake; and think of that angel in heaven, and of your dear aunt Susy."

She put the machine into my hands. It was about the size of the lid of a shaving-box, and I should as soon have thought of wearing it as of wearing a cocked hat and pigtail. I was so disgusted and disappointed that I really could not get out a single word.

When I recovered my presence of mind a little, I took the locket out of the bit of paper (the locket indeed! it was as big as a barndoor padlock), and slowly put it into my shirt. "Thank you, aunt," said I, with admirable raillery. "I shall always value this present for the sake of you, who gave it me; and it will recall to me my uncle, and my thirteen aunts in Ireland."

"I don't want you to wear it in *that* way," shrieked Mrs. Hoggarty, "with the hair of those odious, carroty women! You must have their hair removed."

"Then the locket will be spoiled, aunt."

"Well, sir, never mind the locket; have it set afresh."

"Or suppose," said I, "I put aside the setting altogether—it is a little too large for the present fashion—and have the portrait of my uncle framed and placed over my chimney-piece, next to yours. It's a sweet miniature."

"That miniature," said Mrs. Hoggarty solemnly, "was the great Mulcahy's *chef-d'œuvre*" (pronounced *shy dewver*, a favourite word of my aunt's, being, with the words *bongtong* and *ally mode de Parry*, the extent of her French vocabulary). "You know the dreadful story of that poor, poor artist. When he had finished that wonderful likeness for the late Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty, County Mayo, she wore it in her bosom at the Lord Lieutenant's ball, where she played a game of piquet with the Commander-in-Chief. What could have made her put the hair of her vulgar daughters round Mick's portrait, I can't think; but so it was, as you see it this day. 'Madam,' says the Commander-in-Chief, 'if that is not my friend Mick Hoggarty, I'm a

Dutchman!' Those were his lordship's very words. Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty took off the brooch and showed it to him.

"'Who is the artist?' says my lord. 'It's the most wonderful likeness I ever saw in my life!'

"'Mulcahy,' says she, 'of Ormond's Quay.'

"'Begad, I patronize him!' says my lord; but presently his face darkened, and he gave back the picture with a dissatisfied air. 'There is one fault in that portrait,' said his lordship, who was a rigid disciplinarian; 'and I wonder that my friend Mick, as a military man, should have overlooked it.'

"'What's that?' says Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty.

"'Madam, he has been painted WITHOUT HIS SWORD-BELT!' and he took up the cards again in a passion, and finished the game without saying a single word.

"The news was carried to Mr. Mulcahy the next day, and that unfortunate artist *went mad immediately!* He had set his whole reputation upon this miniature, and declared that it should be faultless. Such was the effect of the announcement upon his susceptible heart! When Mrs. Hoggarty died, your uncle took the portrait, and always wore it himself. His sisters said it was for the sake of the diamond; whereas, ungrateful things! it was merely on account of their hair, and his love for the fine arts. As for the poor artist, my dear, some people said it was the profuse use of spirit that brought on delirium tremens; but I don't believe it. Take another glass of Rosolio."

The telling of this story always put my aunt into great good-humour, and she promised at the end of it to pay for the new setting of the diamond, desiring me to take it on my arrival in London to the great jeweller, Mr. Polonius, and send her the bill. "The fact is," said she, "that the goold in which the thing is set is worth five guineas at the very least, and you can have the diamond reset for two. However, keep the remainder, dear Sam, and buy yourself what you please with it."

With this the old lady bade me adieu. The clock was striking twelve as I walked down the village, for the story of Mulcahy always took an hour in the telling, and I went away not quite so downhearted as when the present was first made

to me. "After all," thought I, "a diamond-pin is a handsome thing, and will give me a *distingué* air, though my clothes be never so shabby"—and shabby they were without any doubt. "Well," I said, "three guineas, which I shall have over, will buy me a couple of pairs of what-d'ye-call-'ems;" of which, *entre nous*, I was in great want, having just then done growing, whereas my pantaloons were made a good eighteen months before.

Well, I walked down the village, my hands in my breeches pockets. I had poor Mary's purse there, having removed the little things which she gave me the day before, and placed them—never mind where; but look you, in those days I had a heart, and a warm one too. I had Mary's purse ready for my aunt's donation, which never came; and with my own little stock of money besides, that Mrs. Hoggarty's card-parties had lessened by a good five-and-twenty shillings, I calculated that, after paying my fare, I should get to town with a couple of seven-shilling pieces in my pocket.

I walked down the village at a deuce of a pace—so quick that, if the thing had been possible, I should have overtaken ten o'clock that had passed by me two hours ago, when I was listening to Mrs. H.'s long stories over her terrible Rosolio. The truth is, at ten I had an appointment under a certain person's window, who was to have been looking at the moon at that hour, with her pretty quilled nightcap on, and her blessed hair in papers.

There was the window shut, and not so much as a candle in it; and though I hemmed and hawed, and whistled over the garden-paling, and sang a song of which Somebody was very fond, and even threw a pebble at the window, which hit it exactly at the opening of the lattice, I woke no one except a great brute of a house-dog, that yelled, and howled, and bounced so at me over the rails, that I thought every moment he would have had my nose between his teeth.

So I was obliged to go off as quickly as might be; and the next morning mamma and my sisters made breakfast for me at four, and at five came the True Blue light six-inside post-coach to London, and I got up on the roof without having seen Mary Smith.

As we passed the house, it *did* seem as if the window-

curtain in her room was drawn aside just a little bit. Certainly the window was open, and it had been shut the night before. But away went the coach, and the village, cottage, and the churchyard, and Hicks's hayricks, were soon out of sight.

* * * * *

"My hi, what a pin!" said a stable-boy, who was smoking a cigar, to the guard, looking at me, and putting his finger to his nose.

The fact is, that I had never undressed since my aunt's party; and being uneasy in mind, and having all my clothes to pack up, and thinking of something else, had quite forgotten Mrs. Hoggarty's brooch, which I had stuck into my shirt-frill the night before.

CHAPTER II.

TELLS HOW THE DIAMOND IS BROUGHT UP TO LONDON, AND PRODUCES WONDERFUL EFFECTS BOTH IN THE CITY AND AT THE WEST END.

THE circumstances recorded in this story took place some score of years ago, when, as the reader may remember, there was a great mania in the city of London for establishing companies of all sorts, by which many people made pretty fortunes.

I was at this period, as the truth must be known, thirteenth clerk of twenty-four young gents who did the immense business of the Independent West Diddlesex Fire and Life Insurance Company, at their splendid stone mansion in Cornhill. Mamma had sunk a sum of four hundred pounds in the purchase of an annuity at this office, which paid her no less than six-and-thirty pounds a year, when no other company in London would give her more than twenty-four. The chairman of the directors was the great Mr. Brough, of the house of Brough and Hoff, Crutched Friars, Turkey Merchants. It was a new house, but did a tremendous business in the fig and sponge way, and more in the Zante currant line than any other firm in the city.

Brough was a great man among the Dissenting connection,

and you saw his name for hundreds at the head of every charitable society patronized by those good people. He had nine clerks residing at his office in Crutched Friars. He would not take one without a certificate from the schoolmaster and clergyman of his native place, strongly vouching for his morals and doctrine; and the places were so run after, that he got a premium of four or five hundred pounds with each young gent, whom he made to slave for ten hours a day, and to whom in compensation he taught all the mysteries of the Turkish business. He was a great man on Change, too; and our young chaps used to hear from the stockbrokers' clerks (we commonly dined together at the "Cock and Woolpack," a respectable house, where you get a capital cut of meat, bread, vegetables, cheese, half a pint of porter, and a penny to the waiter, for a shilling)—the young stockbrokers used to tell us of immense bargains in Spanish, Greek, and Columbians, that Brough made. Hoff had nothing to do with them, but stopped at home minding exclusively the business of the house. He was a young chap, very quiet and steady, of the Quaker persuasion, and had been taken into partnership by Brough for a matter of thirty thousand pounds; and a very good bargain too. I was told in the strictest confidence that the house one year with another divided a good seven thousand pounds; of which Brough had half, Hoff two-sixths, and the other sixth went to old Tudlow, who had been Mr. Brough's clerk before the new partnership began. Tudlow always went about very shabby, and we thought him an old miser. One of our gents, Bob Swinney by name, used to say that Tudlow's share was all nonsense, and that Brough had it all; but Bob was always too knowing by half, used to wear a green cut-away coat, and had his free admission to Covent Garden theatre. He was always talking down at the shop, as we called it (it wasn't a shop, but as splendid an office as any in Cornhill)—he was always talking about Vestris and Miss Tree, and singing,—

"The bramble, the bramble,
The jolly, jolly bramble!"

one of Charles Kemble's famous songs in "Maid Marian;"

a play that was all the rage then, taken from a famous story-book by one Peacock, a clerk in the India House—and a precious good place he has too.

When Brough heard how Master Swinney abused him, and had his admission to the theatre, he came one day down to the office where we all were, four-and-twenty of us, and made one of the most beautiful speeches I ever heard in my life. He said that for slander he did not care—contumely was the lot of every public man who had austere principles of his own, and acted by them austerely; but what he *did* care for was the character of every single gentleman forming a part of the Independent West Diddlesex Association. The welfare of thousands was in their keeping; millions of money were daily passing through their hands; the city, the country looked upon them for order, honesty, and good example. And if he found amongst those whom he considered as his children—those whom he loved as his own flesh and blood—that that order was departed from, that that regularity was not maintained, that that good example was not kept up (Mr. B. always spoke in this emphatic way)—if he found his children departing from the wholesome rules of morality, religion, and decorum—if he found in high or low—in the head clerk at six hundred a year down to the porter who cleaned the steps—if he found the slightest taint of dissipation, he would cast the offender from him—yea, though he were his own son, he would cast him from him!

As he spoke this, Mr. Brough burst into tears; and we, who didn't know what was coming, looked at each other as pale as parsnips—all except Swinney, who was twelfth clerk, and made-believe to whistle. When Mr. B. had wiped his eyes and recovered himself, he turned round; and oh, how my heart thumped as he looked me full in the face! How it was relieved, though, when he shouted out in a thundering voice,—

"Mr. ROBERT SWINNEY!"

"Sir to you," says Swinney, as cool as possible; and some of the chaps began to titter.

"Mr. SWINNEY!" roared Brough, in a voice still bigger than before, "when you came into this office—this family, sir; for such it is, as I am proud to say—you found three-

and-twenty as pious and well-regulated young men as ever laboured together—as ever had confided to them the wealth of this mighty capital and famous empire. You found, sir, sobriety, regularity, and decorum; no profane songs were uttered in this place sacred to—to business; no slanders were whispered against the heads of the establishment—but over them I pass: I can afford, sir, to pass them by—no worldly conversation or foul jesting disturbed the attention of these gentlemen, or desecrated the peaceful scene of their labours. You found Christians and gentlemen, sir!"

"I paid for my place like the rest," said Swinney. "Didn't my governor take sha——?"

"Silence, sir! Your worthy father did take shares in this establishment, which will yield him one day an immense profit. He *did* take shares, sir, or you never would have been here. I glory in saying that every one of my young friends around me has a father, a brother, a dear relative or friend, who is connected in a similar way with our glorious enterprise; and that not one of them is there but has an interest in procuring, at a liberal commission, other persons to join the ranks of our association. *But*, sir, I am its chief. You will find, sir, your appointment signed by me; and in like manner, I, John Brough, annul it. Go from us, sir!—leave us—quit a family that can no longer receive you in its bosom! Mr. Swinney, I have wept, I have prayed, sir, before I came to this determination; I have taken counsel, sir, and am resolved. *Depart from out of us!*"

"Not without three months' salary, though, Mr. B. That cock won't fight!"

"They shall be paid to your father, sir."

"My father be hanged! I'll tell you what, Brough, I'm of age; and if you don't pay me my salary, I'll arrest you—by jingo, I will! I'll have you in quod, or my name's not Bob Swinney!"

"Make out a cheque, Mr. Roundhand, for the three months' salary of this perverted young man."

"Twenty-one pun' five, Roundhand, and nothing for the stamp!" cried out that audacious Swinney. "There it is, sir, *re*-ceipted. You needn't cross it to my banker's.—And if any of you gents like a glass of punch this evening at eight

o'clock, Bob Swinney's your man, and nothing to pay. If Mr. Brough *would* do me the honour to come in and take a whack? Come, don't say no, if you'd rather not!"

We couldn't stand this impudence, and all burst out laughing like mad.

"Leave the room!" yelled Mr. Brough, whose face had turned quite blue; and so Bob took his white hat off the peg, and strolled away, with his "tile," as he called it, very much on one side. When he was gone, Mr. Brough gave us another lecture, by which we all determined to profit; and going up to Roundhand's desk, put his arm round his neck, and looked over the ledger.

"What money has been paid in to-day, Roundhand?" he said, in a very kind way.

"The widow, sir, came with her money: nine hundred and four ten and six—say, £904, 10s. 6d. Captain Sparr, sir, paid his shares up; grumbles, though, and says he's no more: fifty shares—two instalments—three fifties, sir."

"He's always grumbling!"

"He says he has not a shilling to bless himself with until our dividend day."

"Any more?"

Mr. Roundhand went through the book, and made it up nineteen hundred pounds in all. We were doing a famous business now; though when I came into the office we used to sit and laugh, and joke, and read the newspapers all day, bustling into our seats whenever a stray customer came. Brough never cared about our laughing and singing *then*, and was hand and glove with Bob Swinney; but that was in early times, before we were well in harness.

"Nineteen hundred pounds, and a thousand pounds in shares. Bravo, Roundhand—bravo, gentlemen! Remember, every share you bring in brings you five per cent. down on the nail! Look to your friends—stick to your desks—be regular—I hope none of you forget church. Who takes Mr. Swinney's place?"

"Mr. Samuel Titmarsh, sir."

"Mr. Titmarsh, I congratulate you. Give me your hand, sir: you are now twelfth clerk of this Association, and your salary is consequently increased five pounds a year. How is

your worthy mother, sir—your dear and excellent parent? In good health, I trust? And long—long, I fervently pray, may this office continue to pay her annuity! Remember, if she has more money to lay out, there is higher interest than the last for her, for she is a year older; and five per cent. for you, my boy! Why not you as well as another? Young men will be young men, and a ten-pound note does no harm. Does it, Mr. Abednego?"

"Oh, no!" says Abednego, who was third clerk, and who was the chap that informed against Swinney; and he began to laugh, as indeed we all did whenever Mr. Brough made anything like a joke: not that they *were* jokes; only we used to know it by his face.

"Oh, by-the-bye, Roundhand," says he, "a word with you on business. Mrs. Brough wants to know why the deuce you never come down to Fulham?"

"Law, that's very polite!" said Mr. Roundhand, quite pleased.

"Name your day, my boy! Say Saturday, and bring your nightcap with you."

"You're very polite, I'm sure. I should be delighted beyond anything, but——"

"But—no buts, my boy! Hark ye! the Chancellor of the Exchequer does me the honour to dine with us, and I want you to see him; for the truth is, I have bragged about you to his lordship as the best actuary in the three kingdoms."

Roundhand could not refuse such an invitation as *that*, though he had told us how Mrs. R. and he were going to pass Saturday and Sunday at Putney; and we who knew what a life the poor fellow led, were sure that the head clerk would be prettily scolded by his lady when she heard what was going on. She disliked Mrs. Brough very much, that was the fact, because Mrs. B. kept a carriage, and said she didn't know where Pentonville was, and couldn't call on Mrs. Roundhand—though, to be sure, her coachman might have found out the way.

"And oh, Roundhand!" continued our governor, "draw a cheque for seven hundred, will you? Come, don't stare, man; I'm not going to run away! That's right—seven hundred—and ninety say, while you're about it! Our board

meets on Saturday, and never fear I'll account for it to them before I drive you down. We shall take up the Chancellor at Whitehall."

So saying, Mr. Brough folded up the cheque, and shaking hands with Mr. Roundhand very cordially, got into his carriage-and-four (he always drove four horses even in the city, where it's so difficult), which was waiting at the office-door for him.

Bob Swinney used to say that he charged two of the horses to the company; but there was never believing half of what that Bob said, he used to laugh and joke so. I don't know how it was, but I and a gent by the name of Hoskins (eleventh clerk), who lived together with me in Salisbury Square, Fleet Street—where we occupied a very genteel two-pair—found our flute duet rather tiresome that evening, and as it was a very fine night, strolled out for a walk West End way. When we arrived opposite "Covent Garden Theatre" we found ourselves close to the "Globe Tavern," and recollected Bob Swinney's hospitable invitation. We never fancied that he had meant the invitation in earnest, but thought we might as well look in; at any rate, there could be no harm in doing so.

There, to be sure, in the back drawing-room, where he said he would be, we found Bob at the head of a table, and in the midst of a great smoke of cigars, and eighteen of our gents rattling and banging away at the table with the bottoms of their glasses.

What a shout they made as we came in! Hurray!" says Bob, "here's two more! Two more chairs, Mary, two more tumblers, two more hot waters, and two more goes of gin! Who would have thought of seeing Tit, in the name of goodness?"

"Why," said I, "we only came in by the merest chance."

At this word there was another tremendous roar, and it is a positive fact that every man of the eighteen had said he came by chance! However, chance gave us a very jovial night, and that hospitable Bob Swinney paid every shilling of the score.

"Gentlemen!" says he, as he paid the bill, "I'll give you the health of John Brough, Esquire, and thanks to him for

the present of £21, 5s. which he made me this morning. What do I say—£21, 5s.? That and a month's salary that I should have had to pay—forfeit—down on the nail, by jingo! for leaving the shop, as I intended to do to-morrow morning. I've got a place—a tip-top place, I tell you. Five guineas a week, six journeys a year, my own horse and gig, and to travel in the West of England in oil and spermaceti. Here's confusion to gas, and the health of Messrs. Gann and Co., of Thames Street, in the city of London!"

I have been thus particular in my account of the West Diddlesex Assurance Office, and of Mr. Brough, the managing director (though the real names are neither given to the office nor to the chairman, as you may be sure), because the fate of me and my diamond-pin was mysteriously bound up with both, as I am about to show.

You must know that I was rather respected among our gents at the West Diddlesex, because I came of a better family than most of them; had received a classical education; and especially because I had a rich aunt, Mrs. Hoggarty, about whom, as must be confessed, I used to boast a good deal. There is no harm in being respected in this world, as I have found out; and if you don't brag a little for yourself, depend on it there is no person of your acquaintance who will tell the world of your merits, and take the trouble off your hands.

So that when I came back to the office after my visit at home, and took my seat at the old day-book opposite the dingy window that looks into Birchin Lane, I pretty soon let the fellows know that Mrs. Hoggarty, though she had not given me a large sum of money, as I expected—indeed, I had promised a dozen of them a treat down the river, should the promised riches have come to me—I let them know, I say, that though my aunt had not given me any money, she had given me a splendid diamond, worth at least thirty guineas, and that some day I would sport it at the shop.

"Oh, let's see it!" says Abednego, whose father was a mock-jewel and gold-lace merchant in Hanway Yard; and I promised that he should have a sight of it as soon as it was set. As my pocket-money was run out too (by coach-hire to and from home, five shillings to our maid at home, ten

to my aunt's maid and man, five-and-twenty shillings lost at whist, as I said, and fifteen-and-six paid for a silver scissors for the dear little fingers of Somebody), Roundhand, who was very good-natured, asked me to dine, and advanced me £7, 1s. 8d., a month's salary. It was at Roundhand's house, Myddelton Square, Pentonville, over a fillet of veal and bacon and a glass of port, that I learned and saw how his wife ill-treated him, as I have told before. Poor fellow! we under-clerks all thought it was a fine thing to sit at a desk by oneself, and have £50 per month, as Roundhand had; but I've a notion that Hoskins and I, blowing duets on the flute together in our second floor in Salisbury Square, were a great deal more at ease than our head—and more *in harmony*, too; though we made sad work of the music, certainly.

One day Gus Hoskins and I asked leave from Roundhand to be off at three o'clock, as we had *particular business* at the West End. He knew it was about the great Hoggarty diamond, and gave us permission; so off we set. When we reached St. Martin's Lane, Gus got a cigar, to give himself as it were a *distingué* air, and puffed at it all the way up the Lane, and through the alleys into Coventry Street, where Mr. Polonius's shop is, as everybody knows.

The door was open, and a number of carriages full of ladies were drawing up and setting down. Gus kept his hands in his pockets—trousers were worn very full then, with large tucks, and pigeon-holes for your boots, or Bluchers, to come through (the fashionables wore boots, but we chaps in the city, on £80 a year, contented ourselves with Bluchers); and as Gus stretched out his pantaloons as wide as he could from his hips, and kept blowing away at his cheroot, and clamping with the iron heels of his boots, and had very large whiskers for so young a man, he really looked quite the genteel thing, and was taken by everybody to be a person of consideration.

He would not come into the shop though, but stood staring at the gold pots and kettles in the window outside. I went in; and after a little hemming and hawing—for I had never been at such a fashionable place before—asked one of the gentlemen to let me speak to Mr. Polonius.

"What can I do for you, sir?" says Mr. Polonius, who

was standing close by, as it happened, serving three ladies—a very old one and two young ones—who were examining pearl-necklaces very attentively.

"Sir," said I, producing my jewel out of my coat-pocket, "this jewel has, I believe, been in your house before. It belonged to my aunt, Mrs. Hoggarty, of Castle Hoggarty." The old lady standing near looked round as I spoke.

"I sold her a gold neck-chain and repeating watch in the year 1795," said Mr. Polonius, who made it a point to recollect everything; and a silver punch-ladle to the captain. How is the major—colonel—general—ay, sir?"

"The general," said I, "I am sorry to say"—though I was quite proud that this man of fashion should address me so—"Mr. Hoggarty is—no more. My aunt has made me a present, however, of this—this trinket—which, as you see, contains her husband's portrait, that I will thank you, sir, to preserve for me very carefully; and she wishes that you would set this diamond neatly."

"Neatly and handsomely of course, sir."

"Neatly, in the present fashion; and send down the account to her. There is a great deal of gold about the trinket, for which, of course, you will make an allowance."

"To the last fraction of a sixpence," says Mr. Polonius, bowing, and looking at the jewel. "It's a wonderful piece of goods, certainly," said he; "though the diamond's a neat little bit, certainly. Do, my lady, look at it. The thing is of Irish manufacture, bears the stamp of '95, and will recall perhaps the times of your ladyship's earliest youth."

"Get ye out, Mr. Polonius!" said the old lady, a little wizen-faced old lady, with her face puckered up in a million of wrinkles. "How *dar* you, sir, to talk such nonsense to an old woman like me? Wasn't I fifty years old in '95, and a grandmother in '96?" She put out a pair of withered, trembling hands, took up the locket, examined it for a minute, and then burst out laughing. "As I live, it's the great Hoggarty diamond!"

Good heavens! what was this talisman that had come into my possession?

"Look, girls," continued the old lady: "this is the great jew'l of all Ireland. This red-faced man in the middle is

poor Mick Hoggarty, a cousin of mine, who was in love with me in the year '84, when I had just lost your poor dear grandpapa. These thirteen sthreamers of red hair represent his thirteen celebrated sisters—Biddy, Minny, Thedy, Widdy (short for Williamina), Freddy, Izzy, Tizzy, Mysie, Grizzy, Polly, Dolly, Nell, and Bell—all married, all ugly, and all carr'ty hair. And of which are you the son, young man?—though, to do you justice, you're not like the family."

Two pretty young ladies turned two pretty pairs of black eyes at me, and waited for an answer, which they would have had, only the old lady began rattling on a hundred stories about the thirteen ladies above-named, and all their lovers, all their disappointments, and all the duels of Mick Hoggarty. She was a chronicle of fifty-years-old scandal. At last she was interrupted by a violent fit of coughing, at the conclusion of which, Mr. Polonius very respectfully asked me where he should send the pin, and whether I would like the hair kept.

"No," says I, "never mind the hair."

"And the pin, sir?"

I had felt ashamed about telling my address; "but, hang it!" thought I, "why *should* I?—

> 'A king can make a belted knight,
> A marquess, duke, and a' that;
> An honest man's abune his might—
> Gude faith, he canna fa' that.'

Why need I care about telling these ladies where I live?"

"Sir," says I, "have the goodness to send the parcel, when done, to Mr. Titmarsh, No. 3 Bell Lane, Salisbury Square, near St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street. Ring, if you please, the two-pair bell."

"*What*, sir?" said Mr. Polonius.

"*Hwat!*" shrieked the old lady. "Mr. Hwat? *Mais, ma chère, c'est impayable.* Come along—here's the carr'age? Give me your arm, Mr. Hwat, and get inside, and tell me all about your thirteen aunts."

She seized on my elbow, and hobbled through the shop as fast as possible, the young ladies following her, laughing.

"Now, jump in, do you hear?" said she, poking her sharp nose out of the window.

"I can't, ma'am," says I; "I have a friend."

"Pooh, pooh! send 'um to the juice, and jump in!" And before almost I could say a word, a great powdered fellow in yellow-plush breeches pushed me up the steps and banged the door to.

I looked just for one minute as the barouche drove away at Hoskins, and never shall forget his figure. There stood Gus, his mouth wide open, his eyes staring, a smoking cheroot in his hand, wondering with all his might at the strange thing that had just happened to me.

"Who *is* that Titmarsh?" says Gus; "there's a coronet on the carriage, by jingo!"

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE POSSESSOR OF THE DIAMOND IS WHISKED INTO A MAGNIFICENT CHARIOT, AND HAS YET FURTHER GOOD LUCK.

I SAT on the back seat of the carriage near a very nice young lady, about my dear Mary's age—that is to say, seventeen and three quarters; and opposite us sat the old countess and her other granddaughter—handsome too, but ten years older. I recollect I had on that day my blue coat and brass buttons, nankeen trousers, a white sprig waistcoat, and one of Dando's silk hats that had just come in in the year '22, and looked a great deal more glossy than the best beaver.

"And who was that hidjus manster"—that was the way her ladyship pronounced—"that ojous vulgar wretch with the iron heels to his boots, and the big mouth, and the imitation goold neck-chain, who *steered* at us so as we got into the carr'age?"

How she should have known that Gus's chain was mosaic, I can't tell; but so it was, and we had bought it for five-and-twenty and sixpence only the week before at M'Phail's, in St. Paul's Churchyard. But I did not like to hear my friend abused, and so spoke out for him.

"Ma'am," says I, "that young gentleman's name is Augustus Hoskins. We live together, and a better or more kind-hearted fellow does not exist."

"You are quite right to stand up for your friends, sir," said the second lady, whose name, it appears, was Lady Jane, but whom the grandmamma called Lady Jene.

"Well, upon me canscience, so he is now, Lady Jene; and I like sper't in a young man. So his name is Hoskins, is it? I know, my dears, all the Hoskinses in England. There are the Lincolnshire Hoskinses, the Shropshire Hoskinses: they say the admiral's daughter, Bell, was in love with a black footman, or boatswain, or some such thing; but the world's so censorious. There's old Doctor Hoskins of Bath, who attended poor dear Drum in the quinsy; and poor dear old Fred Hoskins, the gouty general: I remember him as thin as a lath in the year '84, and as active as a harlequin, and in love with me—oh, how he was in love with me!"

"You seem to have had a host of admirers in those days, grandmamma?" said Lady Jane.

"Hundreds, my dear—hundreds of thousands. I was the toast of Bath, and a great beauty, too: would you ever have thought it now, upon your conscience and without flattery, Mr.-a-What-d'ye-call-'im?"

"Indeed, ma'am, I never should," I answered, for the old lady was as ugly as possible; and at my saying this, the two young ladies began screaming with laughter, and I saw the two great-whiskered footmen grinning over the back of the carriage.

"Upon my word, you're mighty candid, Mr. What's-your-name—mighty candid indeed; but I like candour in young people. But a beauty I was. Just ask your friend's uncle the general. He's one of the Lincolnshire Hoskinses—I knew he was by the strong family likeness. Is he the eldest son? It's a pretty property, though sadly encumbered; for old Sir George was the divvle of a man—a friend of Hanbury Williams, and Lyttleton, and those horrid, monstrous, ojous people! How much will he have now, mister, when the admiral dies?"

"Why, ma'am, I can't say; but the admiral is not my friend's father."

"Not his father?—but he *is*, I tell you, and I'm never wrong. Who is his father, then?"

"Ma'am, Gus's father's a leather-seller in Skinner Street, Snow Hill—a very respectable house, ma'am. But Gus is only third son, and so can't expect a great share in the property."

The two young ladies smiled at this; the old lady said, "Hwat?"

"I like you, sir," Lady Jane said, "for not being ashamed of your friends, whatever their rank of life may be. Shall we have the pleasure of setting you down anywhere, Mr. Titmarsh?"

"Noways particular, my lady," says I. "We have a holiday at our office to-day—at least, Roundhand gave me and Gus leave; and I shall be very happy, indeed, to take a drive in the Park, if it's no offence."

"I'm sure it will give us—infinite pleasure," said Lady Jane, though rather in a grave way.

"Oh, that it will!" says Lady Fanny, clapping her hands; "won't it, grandmamma? And after we have been in the Park, we can walk in Kensington Gardens, if Mr. Titmarsh will be good enough to accompany us."

"Indeed, Fanny, we will do no such thing," says Lady Jane.

"Indeed but we will though!" shrieked out Lady Drum. "Ain't I dying to know everything about his uncle and thirteen aunts? and you're all chattering so, you young women, that not a blessed syllable will you allow me or my young friend here to speak."

Lady Jane gave a shrug with her shoulders, and did not say a single word more. Lady Fanny, who was as gay as a young kitten (if I may be allowed so to speak of the aristocracy), laughed, and blushed, and giggled, and seemed quite to enjoy her sister's ill-humour. And the countess began at once, and entered into the history of the thirteen Misses Hoggarty, which was not near finished when we entered the Park.

When there, you can't think what hundreds of gents on horseback came to the carriage and talked to the ladies. They had their joke for Lady Drum, who seemed to be a character in her way; their bow for Lady Jane; and, the young ones especially, their compliment for Lady Fanny.

Though she bowed and blushed, as a young lady should, Lady Fanny seemed to be thinking of something else; for she kept her head out of the carriage, looking eagerly among the horsemen, as if she expected to see somebody. Aha! my Lady Fanny, *I* knew what it meant when a young, pretty lady like you was absent, and on the look-out, and only half answered the questions put to her. Let alone Sam Titmarsh —he knows what *somebody* means as well as another, I warrant. As I saw these manœuvres going on, I could not help just giving a wink to Lady Jane, as much as to say I knew what was what. "I guess the young lady is looking for Somebody," says I. It was then *her* turn to look queer, I assure you, and she blushed as red as scarlet; but, after a minute, the good-natured little thing looked at her sister, and both the young ladies put their handkerchiefs up to their faces, and began laughing—laughing as if I had said the funniest thing in the world.

"*Il est charmant, votre monsieur*," said Lady Jane to her grandmamma; and on which I bowed and said, "*Madame, vous me faites beaucoup d'honneur*"—for I know the French language, and was pleased to find that these good ladies had taken a liking to me. "I'm a poor humble lad, ma'am, not used to London society, and do really feel it quite kind of you to take me by the hand so, and give me a drive in your fine carriage."

At this minute a gentleman on a black horse, with a pale face and a tuft to his chin, came riding up to the carriage; and I knew by a little start that Lady Fanny gave, and by her instantly looking round the other way, that *Somebody* was come at last.

"Lady Drum," said he, "your most devoted servant! I have just been riding with a gentleman who almost shot himself for love of the beautiful Countess of Drum in the year—never mind the year."

"Was it Killblazes?" said the lady; "he's a dear old man, and I'm quite ready to go off with him this minute. Or was it that delight of an old bishop? He's got a lock of my hair now—I gave it him when he was papa's chaplain; and let me tell you it would be a hard matter to find another now in the same place."

"Law, my lady!" says I, "you don't say so?"

"But indeed I do, my good sir," says she; "for between ourselves, my head's as bare as a cannon-ball—ask Fanny if it isn't. Such a fright as the poor thing got when she was a babby, and came upon me suddenly in my dressing-room without my wig!"

"I hope Lady Fanny has recovered from the shock," said Somebody, looking first at her, and then at me as if he had a mind to swallow me. And would you believe it? all that Lady Fanny could say was, "Pretty well, I thank you, my lord;" and she said this with as much fluttering and blushing as we used to say our Virgil at school—when we hadn't learned it.

My lord still kept on looking very fiercely at me, and muttered something about having hoped to find a seat in Lady Drum's carriage, as he was tired of riding; on which Lady Fanny muttered something, too, about "a friend of grandmamma's."

"You should say a friend of yours, Fanny," says Lady Jane. "I am sure we should never have come to the Park if Fanny had not insisted upon bringing Mr. Titmarsh hither. Let me introduce the Earl of Tiptoff to Mr. Titmarsh." But, instead of taking off his hat, as I did mine, his lordship growled out that he hoped for another opportunity, and galloped off again on his black horse. Why the deuce *I* should have offended him I never could understand.

But it seemed as if I was destined to offend all the men that day; for who should presently come up but the Right Hon. Edmund Preston, one of his Majesty's Secretaries of State (as I knew very well by the almanac in our office), and the husband of Lady Jane.

The Right Hon. Edmund was riding a grey cob, and was a fat, pale-faced man, who looked as if he never went into the open air. "Who the devil's that?" said he to his wife, looking surlily both at me and her.

"Oh, it's a friend of grandmamma's and Jane's," said Lady Fanny at once, looking, like a sly rogue as she was, quite archly at her sister, who in her turn appeared quite frightened, and looked imploringly at her sister, and never dared to breathe a syllable. "Yes, indeed," continued Lady

Fanny, "Mr. Titmarsh is a cousin of grandmamma's by the mother's side—by the Hoggarty side. Didn't you know the Hoggarties when you were in Ireland, Edmund, with Lord Bagwig? Let me introduce you to grandmamma's cousin, Mr. Titmarsh;—Mr. Titmarsh, my brother, Mr. Edmund Preston."

There was Lady Jane all the time treading upon her sister's foot as hard as possible, and the little wicked thing would take no notice; and I, who had never heard of the cousinship, feeling as confounded as could be. But I did not know the Countess of Drum near so well as that sly minx her granddaughter did; for the old lady, who had just before called poor Gus Hoskins her cousin, had, it appeared, the mania of fancying all the world related to her, and said,—

"Yes, we're cousins, and not very far removed. Mick Hoggarty's grandmother was Millicent Brady, and she and my aunt Towzer were related, as all the world knows; for Decimus Brady, of Ballybrady, married an own cousin of aunt Towzer's mother, Bell Swift—that was no relation of the Dean's, my love, who came but of a so-so family—and isn't *that* clear?"

"Oh, perfectly, grandmamma," said Lady Jane, laughing, while the right honourable gent still rode by us, looking sour and surly.

"And sure you knew the Hoggarties, Edmund?—the thirteen red-haired girls—the nine graces, and four over, as poor Clanboy used to call them. Poor Clan!—a cousin of yours and mine, Mr. Titmarsh, and sadly in love with me he was too. Not remember them *all* now, Edmund?—not remember?—not remember Biddy and Minny, and Thedy and Widdy, and Mysie and Grizzy, and Polly and Dolly, and the rest?"

"D— the Miss Hoggarties, ma'am," said the right honourable gent; and he said it with such energy that his grey horse gave a sudden lash out that wellnigh sent him over his head. Lady Jane screamed; Lady Fanny laughed; old Lady Drum looked as if she did not care twopence, and said, "Serve you right for swearing, you ojous man you!"

"Hadn't you better come into the carriage, Edmund—Mr. Preston?" cried out the lady anxiously.

"Oh, I'm sure I'll slip out, ma'am," says I.

"Pooh—pooh! don't stir," said Lady Drum. "It's my carriage; and if Mr. Preston chooses to swear at a lady of my years in that ojous, vulgar way—in that ojous, vulgar way, I repeat—I don't see why my friends should be inconvenienced for him. Let him sit on the dicky if he likes, or come in and ride bodkin." It was quite clear that my Lady Drum hated her grandson-in-law heartily; and I've remarked somehow in families that this kind of hatred is by no means uncommon.

Mr. Preston, one of his Majesty's Secretaries of State, was, to tell the truth, in a great fright upon his horse, and was glad to get away from the kicking, plunging brute. His pale face looked still paler than before, and his hands and legs trembled as he dismounted from the cob and gave the reins to his servant. I disliked the looks of the chap—of the master, I mean—at the first moment he came up, when he spoke rudely to that nice gentle wife of his; and I thought he was a cowardly fellow, as the adventure of the cob showed him to be. Heaven bless you! a baby could have ridden it; and here was the man with his soul in his mouth at the very first kick.

"Oh, quick! *do* come in, Edmund," said Lady Fanny, laughing; and the carriage steps being let down, and giving me a great scowl as he came in, he was going to place himself in Lady Fanny's corner (I warrant you I wouldn't budge from mine), when the little rogue cried out, "Oh, no! by no means, Mr. Preston. Shut the door, Thomas. And oh! what fun it will be to show all the world a Secretary of State riding bodkin!"

And pretty glum the Secretary of State looked, I assure you!

"Take my place, Edmund, and don't mind Fanny's folly," said Lady Jane timidly.

"Oh, no!—pray, madam, don't stir! I'm comfortable—very comfortable; and so I hope is this Mr.—this gentleman."

"Perfectly, I assure you," says I. "I was going to offer to ride your horse home for you, as you seemed to be rather frightened at it; but the fact was, I was so comfortable here that really I *couldn't* move."

Such a grin as old Lady Drum gave when I said that!—how her little eyes twinkled, and her little sly mouth puckered up! I couldn't help speaking; for, look you, my blood was up.

"We shall always be happy of your company, cousin Titmarsh," says she; and handed me a gold snuff-box, out of which I took a pinch, and sneezed with the air of a lord.

"As you have invited this gentleman into your carriage, Lady Jane Preston, hadn't you better invite him home to dinner?" says Mr. Preston, quite blue with rage.

"I invited him into *my* carr'age," says the old lady; "and as we are going to dine at your house, and you press it, I'm sure I shall be very happy to see him there."

"I'm very sorry I'm engaged," said I.

"Oh, indeed, what a pity!" says Right Honourable Ned, still glowering at his wife. "What a pity that this gentleman—I forget his name—that your friend, Lady Jane, is engaged! I am sure you would have had such gratification in meeting your relation in Whitehall."

Lady Drum was over-fond of finding out relations, to be sure; but this speech of Right Honourable Ned's was rather too much. "Now, Sam," says I, "be a man and show your spirit!" So I spoke up at once, and said, "Why, ladies, as the right honourable gent is so *very* pressing, I'll give up my engagement, and shall have sincere pleasure in cutting mutton with him. What's your hour, sir?"

He didn't condescend to answer, and for me I did not care; for, you see, I did not intend to dine with the man, but only to give him a lesson of manners. For though I am but a poor fellow, and hear people cry out how vulgar it is to eat pease with a knife, or ask three times for cheese, and such like points of ceremony, there's something, I think, much more vulgar than all this, and that is, insolence to one's inferiors. I hate the chap that uses it, as I scorn him of humble rank that affects to be of the fashion; and so I determined to let Mr. Preston know a piece of my mind.

When the carriage drove up to his house, I handed out the ladies as politely as possible, and walked into the hall; and then taking hold of Mr. Preston's button at the door, I said, before the ladies and the two big servants—upon my

Sich liveries—two great footmen, with red whiskers and yellow-plush small-clothes; and inside, a very old lady in a white poke-bonnet, and a young one with a great Leghorn hat and blue ribands, and a great tall pale gentleman with a tuft on his chin.

"'Pray, madam, does Mr. Titmarsh live here?'" says the young lady with her clear voice.

"'Yes, my lady,' says I; 'but he's at the office—the West Diddlesex Fire and Life Office, Cornhill.'

"'Charles, get out the things,' says the gentleman, quite solemn.

"'Yes, my lord,' says Charles; and brings me out the haunch in a newspaper, and on the chany dish as you see it, and the two baskets of fruit besides.

"'Have the kindness, madam,' says my lord, 'to take these things to Mr. Titmarsh's rooms, with our, with Lady Jane Preston's compliments, and request his acceptance of them.' And then he pulled out the cards on your table, and this letter, sealed with his lordship's own crown."

And herewith Mrs. Stokes gave me a letter, which my wife keeps to this day, by the way, and which runs thus:—

"The Earl of Tiptoff has been commissioned by Lady Jane Preston to express her sincere regret and disappointment that she was not able yesterday to enjoy the pleasure of Mr. Titmarsh's company. Lady Jane is about to leave town immediately; she will therefore be unable to receive her friends in Whitehall Place this season. But Lord Tiptoff trusts that Mr. Titmarsh will have the kindness to accept some of the produce of her ladyship's garden and park, with which, perhaps, he will entertain some of those friends in whose favour he knows so well how to speak."

Along with this was a little note containing the words, "Lady Drum at home. Friday evening, June 17." And all this came to me because my aunt Hoggarty had given me a diamond-pin.

I did not send back the venison: as why should I? Gus was for sending it at once to Brough, our director, and the grapes and peaches to my aunt in Somersetshire.

"But no," says I. "We'll ask Bob Swinney and half a dozen more of our gents, and we'll have a merry night of it on

Saturday." And a merry night we had too; and as we had no wine in the cupboard, we had plenty of ale, and gin-punch afterwards. And Gus sat at the foot of the table, and I at the head; and we sang songs, both comic and sentimental; and drank toasts; and I made a speech that there is no possibility of mentioning here, because, *entre nous*, I had quite forgotten, in the morning, everything that had taken place after a certain period on the night before.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE HAPPY DIAMOND WEARER DINES AT PENTONVILLE.

I DID not go to the office till half an hour after opening time on Monday. If the truth must be told, I was not sorry to let Hoskins have the start of me, and tell the chaps what had taken place; for we all have our little vanities, and I liked to be thought well of by my companions.

When I came in, I saw my business had been done, by the way in which the chaps looked at me—especially Abednego, who offered me a pinch out of his gold snuff-box the very first thing. Roundhand shook me, too, warmly by the hand, when he came round to look over my day-book, said I wrote a capital hand (and, indeed, I believe I do, without any sort of flattery), and invited me for dinner next Sunday, in Myddelton Square. "You won't have," said he, "quite such a grand turn-out as with *your friends at the West End*"—he said this with a particular accent—"but Amelia and I are always happy to see a friend in our plain way—pale sherry, old port, and cut and come again. Hey?"

I said I would come, and bring Hoskins too.

He answered that I was very polite, and that he should be very happy to see Hoskins; and we went accordingly, at the appointed day and hour. But though Gus was eleventh clerk and I twelfth, I remarked that at dinner I was helped first and best. I had twice as many forced-meat balls as Hoskins in my mock-turtle, and pretty nearly all the oysters out of the sauce-boat. Once Roundhand was going to help Gus before me, when his wife, who was seated at the head of the table,

looking very big and fierce in red crape and a turban, shouted out, "ANTONY!" and poor R. dropped the plate, and blushed as red as anything. How Mrs. R. did talk to me about the West End, to be sure! She had a "Peerage," as you may be certain, and knew everything about the Drum family in a manner that quite astonished me. She asked me how much Lord Drum had a year; whether I thought he had twenty, thirty, forty, or a hundred and fifty thousand a year; whether I was invited to Drum Castle; what the young ladies wore, and if they had those odious *gigot* sleeves which were just coming in then. And here Mrs. R. looked at a pair of large mottled arms that she was very proud of.

"I say, Sam, my boy!" cried, in the midst of our talk, Mr. Roundhand, who had been passing the port wine round pretty freely, "I hope you looked to the main chance, and put in a few shares of the West Diddlesex—hey?"

"Mr. Roundhand, have you put up the decanters downstairs?" cries the lady, quite angry, and wishing to stop the conversation.

"No, Milly; I've *emptied* 'em," says R.

"Don't Milly me, sir! and have the goodness to go down and tell Lancy, my maid" (*a look at me*), "to make the tea in the study. We have a gentleman here who is not *used* to Pentonville ways" (*another look*); "but he won't mind the ways of *friends*." And here Mrs. Roundhand heaved her very large chest, and gave me a third look that was so severe, that I declare to goodness it made me look quite foolish. As to Gus, she never so much as spoke to him all the evening; but he consoled himself with a great lot of muffins, and sat most of the evening (it was a cruel hot summer) whistling and talking with Roundhand on the veranda. I think I should like to have been with them, for it was very close in the room with that great big Mrs. Roundhand squeezing close up to one on the sofa.

"Do you recollect what a jolly night we had here last summer?" I heard Hoskins say, who was leaning over the balcony, and ogling the girls coming home from church. "You and me with our coats off, plenty of cold rum-and-water, Mrs. Roundhand at Margate, and a whole box of Manillas?"

"Hush!" said Roundhand, quite eagerly; "Milly will hear."

But Milly didn't hear; for she was occupied in telling me an immense long story about her waltzing with the Count de Schloppenzollern at the City ball to the Allied Sovereigns, and how the count had great large white moustaches, and how odd she thought it to go whirling round the room with a great man's arm round your waist. "Mr. Roundhand has never allowed it since our marriage—never; but in the year 'fourteen it was considered a proper compliment, you know, to pay the sovereigns. So twenty-nine young ladies, of the best families in the city of London, I assure you, Mr. Titmarsh—there was the Lord Mayor's own daughters; Alderman Dobbin's gals; Sir Charles Hopper's three, who have the great house in Baker Street; and your humble servant, who was rather slimmer in those days—twenty-nine of us had a dancing-master on purpose, and practised waltzing in a room over the Egyptian Hall at the Mansion House. He was a splendid man, that Count Schloppenzollern!"

"I am sure, ma'am," says I, "he had a splendid partner!" and blushed up to my eyes when I said it.

"Get away, you naughty creature!" says Mrs. Roundhand, giving me a great slap; "you're all the same, you men in the West End—all deceivers. The count was just like you. Heigho! Before you marry, it's all honey and compliments; when you win us, it's all coldness and indifference. Look at Roundhand, the great baby, trying to beat down a butterfly with his yellow bandanna! Can a man like *that* comprehend me? can he fill the void in my heart?" (She pronounced it without the *h*; but that there should be no mistake, laid her hand upon the place meant.) "Ah, no! Will *you* be so neglectful when *you* marry, Mr. Titmarsh?"

As she spoke, the bells were just tolling the people out of church, and I fell a-thinking of my dear, dear Mary Smith in the country, walking home to her grandmother's, in her modest grey cloak, as the bells were chiming and the air full of the sweet smell of the hay, and the river shining in the sun, all crimson, purple, gold, and silver. There was my dear Mary a hundred and twenty miles off, in Somersetshire, walking home from church along with Mr. Snorter's family,

with which she came and went; and I was listening to the talk of this great leering, vulgar woman.

I could not help feeling for a certain half of a sixpence that you have heard me speak of, and putting my hand mechanically upon my chest, I tore my fingers with the point of my new DIAMOND-PIN. Mr. Polonius had sent it home the night before, and I sported it for the first time at Roundhand's to dinner.

"It's a beautiful diamond," said Mrs. Roundhand. "I have been looking at it all dinner-time. How rich you must be to wear such splendid things! and how can you remain in a vulgar office in the city—you who have such great acquaintances at the West End?"

The woman had somehow put me in such a passion that I bounced off the sofa, and made for the balcony without answering a word,—ay, and half broke my head against the sash, too, as I went out to the gents in the open air. "Gus," says I, "I feel very unwell. I wish you'd come home with me." And Gus did not desire anything better; for he had ogled the last girl out of the last church, and the night was beginning to fall.

"What! already?" said Mrs. Roundhand. "There is a lobster coming up—a trifling refreshment; not what he's accustomed to, but——"

I am sorry to say I nearly said, "D—— the lobster!" as Roundhand went and whispered to her that I was ill.

"Ay," said Gus, looking very knowing. "Recollect, Mrs. R., that he was *at the West End* on Thursday, asked to dine, ma'am, with the tip-top nobs. Chaps don't dine at the West End for nothing, do they, R.? If you play at *bowls*, you know——"

"You must look out for *rubbers*," said Roundhand, as quick as thought.

"Not in my house of a Sunday," said Mrs. R., looking very fierce and angry. "Not a card shall be touched *here*. Are we in a Protestant land, sir? in a Christian country?"

"My dear, you don't understand. We were not talking of rubbers of whist."

"There shall be *no* game at all in the house of a Sabbath

eve," said Mrs. Roundhand; and out she flounced from the room, without ever so much as wishing us good-night.

"Do stay," said the husband, looking very much frightened —"do stay. She won't come back while you're here; and I do wish you'd stay so."

But we wouldn't; and when we reached Salisbury Square, I gave Gus a lecture about spending his Sundays idly, and read out one of Blair's sermons before we went to bed. As I turned over in bed, I could not help thinking about the luck the pin had brought me; and it was not over yet, as you will see in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

HOW THE DIAMOND INTRODUCES HIM TO A STILL MORE FASHIONABLE PLACE.

To tell the truth, though, about the pin, although I mentioned it almost the last thing in the previous chapter, I assure you it was by no means the last thing in my thoughts. It had come home from Mr. Polonius's, as I said, on Saturday night, and Gus and I happened to be out enjoying ourselves, half-price, at Sadler's Wells; and perhaps we took a little refreshment on our way back—but that has nothing to do with my story.

On the table, however, was the little box from the jeweller's; and when I took it out—*my*, how the diamond did twinkle and glitter by the light of our one candle!

"I'm sure it would light up the room of itself," says Gus. "I've read they do in—in history."

It was in the history of Cogia Hassan Alhabbal, in the "Arabian Nights," as I knew very well. But we put the candle out, nevertheless, to try.

"Well, I declare to goodness it does illuminate the whole place!" says Gus; but the fact was, that there was a gas-lamp opposite our window, and I believe that was the reason why we could see pretty well. At least, in my bedroom, to which I was obliged to go without a candle, and of which the window looked out on a dead wall, I could not see a

wink, in spite of the Hoggarty diamond, and was obliged to grope about in the dark for a pincushion which Somebody gave me (I don't mind owning it was Mary Smith), and in which I stuck it for the night. But, somehow, I did not sleep much for thinking of it, and woke very early in the morning; and, if the truth must be told, stuck it in my night-gown, like a fool, and admired myself very much in the glass.

Gus admired it as much as I did; for since my return, and especially since my venison dinner and drive with Lady Drum, he thought I was the finest fellow in the world, and boasted about his "West End friend" everywhere.

As we were going to dine at Roundhand's, and I had no black satin stock to set it off, I was obliged to place it in the frill of my best shirt—which tore the muslin sadly, by the way. However, the diamond had its effect on my entertainers, as we have seen—rather too much perhaps on one of them—and next day I wore it down at the office, as Gus would make me do; though it did not look near so well in the second day's shirt as on the first day, when the linen was quite clear and bright with Somersetshire washing.

The chaps at the West Diddlesex all admired it hugely, except that snarling Scotchman M'Whirter, fourth clerk—out of envy because I did not think much of a great yellow stone named a carum-gorum, or some such thing, which he had in a snuff-mull, as he called it—all except M'Whirter, I say, were delighted with it; and Abednego himself, who ought to know, as his father was in the line, told me the jewel was worth at least ten poundsh, and that his governor would give me as much for it.

"That's a proof," says Roundhand, "that Tit's diamond is worth at least thirty." And we all laughed, and agreed it was.

Now I must confess that all these praises, and the respect that was paid me, turned my head a little; and as all the chaps said I *must* have a black satin stock to set the stone off, I was fool enough to buy a stock that cost me five-and-twenty shillings at Ludlam's in Piccadilly—for Gus said I must go to the best place, to be sure, and have none of our cheap and common East End stuff. I might have had one

for sixteen and six in Cheapside, every whit as good; but when a young lad becomes vain, and wants to be fashionable, you see he can't help being extravagant.

Our director, Mr. Brough, did not fail to hear of the haunch of venison business, and my relationship with Lady Drum and the Right Hon. Edmund Preston—only Abednego, who told him, said I was her ladyship's first cousin; and this made Brough think more of me, and no worse than before.

Mr. B. was, as everybody knows, Member of Parliament for Rottenburgh; and being considered one of the richest men in the city of London, used to receive all the great people of the land at his villa at Fulham; and we often read in the papers of the rare doings going on there.

Well, the pin certainly worked wonders; for not content merely with making me a present of a ride in a countess's carriage, of a haunch of venison and two baskets of fruit, and the dinner at Roundhand's above described, my diamond had other honours in store for me, and procured me the honour of an invitation to the house of our director, Mr. Brough.

Once a year, in June, that honourable gent gave a grand ball at his house at Fulham; and by the accounts of the entertainment brought back by one or two of our chaps who had been invited, it was one of the most magnificent things to be seen about London. You saw Members of Parliament there as thick as peas in July, lords and ladies without end. There was everything and everybody of the tip-top sort; and I have heard that Mr. Gunter, of Berkeley Square, supplied the ices, supper, and footmen—though of the latter Brough kept a plenty, but not enough to serve the host of people who came to him. The party, it must be remembered, was *Mrs.* Brough's party, not the gentleman's; he, being in the Dissenting way, would scarcely sanction any entertainments of the kind. But he told his city friends that his lady governed him in everything; and it was generally observed that most of them would allow their daughters to go to the ball if asked, on account of the immense number of the nobility which our director assembled together. Mrs. Roundhand, I know for one, would have given one of her

ears to go; but, as I have said before, nothing would induce Brough to ask her.

Roundhand himself, and Gutch, nineteenth clerk, son of the brother of an East Indian director, were the only two of our gents invited, as we knew very well; for they had received their invitations many weeks before, and bragged about them not a little. But two days before the ball, and after my diamond-pin had had its due effect upon the gents at the office, Abednego, who had been in the directors' room, came to my desk with a great smirk, and said, "Tit, Mr. B. says that he expects you will come down with Roundhand to the ball on Thursday." I thought Moses was joking—at any rate, that Mr. B.'s message was a queer one; for people don't usually send invitations in that abrupt, peremptory sort of way; but, sure enough, he presently came down himself and confirmed it, saying, as he was going out of the office, "Mr. Titmarsh, you will come down on Thursday to Mrs. Brough's party, where you will see some relations of yours."

"West End again!" says that Gus Hoskins; and accordingly down I went, taking a place in a cab which Roundhand hired for himself, Gutch, and me, and for which he very generously paid eight shillings.

There is no use to describe the grand gala, nor the number of lamps in the lodge and in the garden, nor the crowd of carriages that came in at the gates, nor the troops of curious people outside; nor the ices, fiddlers, wreaths of flowers, and cold supper within. The whole description was beautifully given in a fashionable paper, by a reporter who observed the same from the "Yellow Lion" over the way, and told it in his journal in the most accurate manner, getting an account of the dresses of the great people from their footmen and coachmen, when they came to the ale-house for their porter. As for the names of the guests, they, you may be sure, found their way to the same newspaper; and a great laugh was had at my expense, because among the titles of the great people mentioned my name appeared in the list of the "Honourables." Next day, Brough advertised "a hundred and fifty guineas reward for an emerald necklace lost at the party of John Brough, Esq., at Fulham;" though some of

our people said that no such thing was lost at all, and that Brough only wanted to advertise the magnificence of his society; but this doubt was raised by persons not invited, and envious no doubt.

Well, I wore my diamond, as you may imagine, and rigged myself in my best clothes—namely, my blue coat and brass buttons before mentioned, nankeen trousers and silk stockings, a white waistcoat, and a pair of white gloves bought for the occasion. But my coat was of country make, very high in the waist and short in the sleeves, and I suppose must have looked rather odd to some of the great people assembled; for they stared at me a great deal, and a whole crowd formed to see me dance—which I did to the best of my power, performing all the steps accurately and with great agility, as I had been taught by our dancing-master in the country.

And with whom do you think I had the honour to dance? With no less a person than Lady Jane Preston, who, it appears, had not gone out of town, and who shook me most kindly by the hand when she saw me, and asked me to dance with her. We had my Lord Tiptoff and Lady Fanny Rakes for our *vis-à-vis*.

You should have seen how the people crowded to look at us, and admired my dancing too; for I cut the very best of capers, quite different to the rest of the gents (my lord among the number), who walked through the quadrille as if they thought it a trouble, and stared at my activity with all their might. But when I have a dance I like to enjoy myself; and Mary Smith often said I was the very best partner at our assemblies. While we were dancing, I told Lady Jane how Roundhand, Gutch, and I had come down three in a cab, besides the driver; and my account of our adventures made her ladyship laugh, I warrant you. Lucky it was for me that I didn't go back in the same vehicle; for the driver went and intoxicated himself at the "Yellow Lion," threw out Gutch and our head clerk as he was driving them back, and actually fought Gutch afterwards and blacked his eye, because he said that Gutch's red velvet waistcoat frightened the horse.

Lady Jane, however, spared me such an uncomfortable

ride home: for she said she had a fourth place in her carriage, and asked me if I would accept it; and positively, at two o'clock in the morning, there was I, after setting the ladies and my lord down, driven to Salisbury Square in a great thundering carriage, with flaming lamps and two tall footmen, who nearly knocked the door and the whole little street down with the noise they made at the rapper. You should have seen Gus's head peeping out of window in his white nightcap! He kept me up the whole night telling him about the ball, and the great people I had seen there; and next day he told at the office my stories, with his own usual embroideries upon them.

"Mr. Titmarsh," said Lady Fanny, laughing to me, "who is that great fat, curious man, the master of the house? Do you know he asked me if you were not related to us? and I said, 'Oh, yes, you were.'"

"Fanny!" says Lady Jane.

"Well," answered the other, "did not grandmamma say Mr. Titmarsh was her cousin?"

"But you know that grandmamma's memory is not very good."

"Indeed, you're wrong, Lady Jane," says my lord; "I think it's prodigious."

"Yes, but not very—not very accurate."

"No, my lady," says I; "for her ladyship, the Countess of Drum, said, if you remember, that my friend Gus Hoskins——"

"Whose cause you supported so bravely," cries Lady Fanny.

"—That my friend Gus is her ladyship's cousin too; which cannot be, for I know all his family: they live in Skinner Street and St. Mary Axe, and are not—not quite so *respectable* as *my* relatives."

At this they all began to laugh; and my lord said, rather haughtily,—

"Depend upon it, Mr. Titmarsh, that Lady Drum is no more your cousin than she is the cousin of your friend Mr. Hoskinson."

"Hoskins, my lord. And so I told Gus; but you see he is very fond of me, and *will* have it that I am related to

Lady D., and say what I will to the contrary, tells the story everywhere. Though to be sure," added I, with a laugh, "it has gained me no small good in my time." So I described to the party our dinner at Mrs. Roundhand's, which all came from my diamond-pin, and my reputation as a connection of the aristocracy. Then I thanked Lady Jane handsomely for her magnificent present of fruit and venison, and told her that it had entertained a great number of kind friends of mine, who had drunk her ladyship's health with the greatest gratitude.

"*A haunch of venison!*" cried Lady Jane, quite astonished; "indeed, Mr. Titmarsh, I am quite at a loss to understand you."

As we passed a gas-lamp, I saw Lady Fanny laughing as usual, and turning her great arch sparkling black eyes at Lord Tiptoff.

"Why, Lady Jane," said he, "if the truth must out, the great haunch of venison trick was one of this young lady's performing. You must know that I had received the above-named haunch from Lord Guttlebury's park; and knowing that Preston is not averse to Guttlebury venison, was telling Lady Drum (in whose carriage I had a seat that day, as Mr. Titmarsh was not in the way) that I intended the haunch for your husband's table. Whereupon my Lady Fanny, clapping together her little hands, declared and vowed that the venison should *not* go to Preston, but should be sent to a gentleman about whose adventures on the day previous we had just been talking—to Mr. Titmarsh, in fact, whom Preston, as Fanny vowed, had used most cruelly, and to whom, she said, a reparation was due. So my Lady Fanny insists upon our driving straight to my rooms in the 'Albany' (you know I am only to stay in my bachelor's quarters a month longer)——"

"Nonsense!" says Lady Fanny.

"—Insists upon driving straight to my chambers in the 'Albany,' extracting thence the above-named haunch——"

"Grandmamma was very sorry to part with it," cries Lady Fanny.

"—And then she orders us to proceed to Mr. Titmarsh's house in the city, where the venison was left, in company

with a couple of baskets of fruit bought at Grange's by Lady Fanny herself."

"And what was more," said Lady Fanny, "I made grandmamma go into Fr—— into Lord Tiptoff's rooms, and dictated out of my own mouth the letter which he wrote, and pinned up the haunch of venison that his hideous old housekeeper brought us—I am quite jealous of her—I pinned up the haunch of venison in a copy of the *John Bull* newspaper."

It had one of the Ramsbottom letters in it, I remember, which Gus and I read on Sunday at breakfast, and we nearly killed ourselves with laughing. The ladies laughed too when I told them this; and good-natured Lady Jane said she would forgive her sister, and hoped I would too, which I promised to do as often as her ladyship chose to repeat the offence.

I never had any more venison from the family, but I'll tell you *what* I had. About a month after came a card of "Lord and Lady Tiptoff," and a great piece of plum-cake; of which, I am sorry to say, Gus ate a great deal too much.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE WEST DIDDLESEX ASSOCIATION, AND OF THE EFFECT THE DIAMOND HAD THERE.

WELL, the magic of the pin was not over yet. Very soon after Mrs. Brough's grand party, our director called me up to his room at the West Diddlesex, and after examining my accounts, and speaking a while about business, said, "That's a very fine diamond-pin, Master Titmarsh" (he spoke in a grave, patronizing way), "and I called you on purpose to speak to you upon the subject. I do not object to seeing the young men of this establishment well and handsomely dressed; but I know that their salaries cannot afford ornaments like those, and I grieve to see you with a thing of such value. You have paid for it, sir—I trust you have paid for it; for, of all things, my dear—dear young friend, beware of debt."

I could not conceive why Brough was reading me this lecture about debt and my having bought the diamond-pin, as I knew that he had been asking about it already, and how I came by it—Abednego told me so. "Why, sir," says I, "Mr. Abednego told me that he had told you that I had told him——"

"Oh, ay—by-the-bye, now I recollect, Mr. Titmarsh—I *do* recollect—yes; though I suppose, sir, you will imagine that I have other more important things to remember."

"Oh, sir, in course," says I.

"That one of the clerks *did* say something about a pin—that one of the other gentlemen had it. And so your pin was given you, was it?"

"It was given me, sir, by my aunt, Mrs. Hoggarty, of Castle Hoggarty," said I, raising my voice; for I was a little proud of Castle Hoggarty.

"She must be very rich to make such presents, Titmarsh?"

"Why, thank you, sir," says I, "she *is* pretty well off. Four hundred a year jointure; a farm at Slopperton, sir; three houses at Squashtail; and three thousand two hundred loose cash at the banker's, as I happen to know, sir,—*that's all.*"

I did happen to know this, you see; because, while I was down in Somersetshire, Mr. MacManus, my aunt's agent in Ireland, wrote to say that a mortgage she had on Lord Brallaghan's property had just been paid off, and that the money was lodged at Coutts's. Ireland was in a very disturbed state in those days; and my aunt wisely determined not to invest her money in that country any more, but to look out for some good security in England. However, as she had always received six per cent. in Ireland, she would not hear of a smaller interest; and had warned me, as I was a commercial man, on coming to town, to look out for some means by which she could invest her money at that rate at least.

"And how do you come to know Mrs. Hoggarty's property so accurately?" said Mr. Brough; upon which I told him.

"Good heavens, sir! and do you mean that you, a clerk in the West Diddlesex Insurance Office, applied to by a

respectable lady as to the manner in which she should invest property, never spoke to her about the Company which you have the honour to serve? Do you mean, sir, that you, knowing there was a bonus of five per cent. for yourself upon shares taken, did not press Mrs. Hoggarty to join us?"

"Sir," says I, "I'm an honest man, and would not take a bonus from my own relation."

"Honest I know you are, my boy—give me your hand! So am I honest—so is every man in this Company honest; but we must be prudent as well. We have five millions of capital on our books, as you see—five *bonâ-fide* millions of *bonâ-fide* sovereigns paid up, sir: there is no dishonesty there. But why should we not have twenty millions—a hundred millions? Why should not this be the greatest commercial association in the world!—as it shall be, sir,—it shall, as sure as my name is John Brough, if Heaven bless my honest endeavours to establish it! But do you suppose that it can be so unless every man among us use his utmost exertions to forward the success of the enterprise? Never, sir—never; and, for me, I say so everywhere. I glory in what I do. There is not a house in which I enter, but I leave a prospectus of the West Diddlesex. There is not a single tradesman I employ, but has shares in it to some amount. My servants, sir—my very servants and grooms, are bound up with it. And the first question I ask of any one who applies to me for a place is, Are you insured or a shareholder in the West Diddlesex? the second, Have you a good character? And if the first question is answered in the negative, I say to the party coming to me, Then *be* a shareholder before you ask for a place in my household. Did you not see me—me, John Brough, whose name is good for millions—step out of my coach-and-four into this office, with four pounds nineteen, which I paid in to Mr. Roundhand as the price of half a share for the porter at my lodge-gate? Did you remark that I deducted a shilling from the five pound?"

"Yes, sir; it was the day you drew out eight hundred and seventy-three ten and six—Thursday week," says I.

"And why did I deduct that shilling, sir? Because it was *my commission*—John Brough's commission of five per cent.;

honestly earned by him, and openly taken. Was there any disguise about it? No. Did I do it for the love of a shilling? No," says Brough, laying his hand on his heart, "I did it from *principle*—from that motive which guides every one of my actions, as I can look up to heaven and say. I wish all my young men to see my example, and follow it. I wish—I pray that they may. Think of that example, sir. That porter of mine has a sick wife and nine young children; he is himself a sick man, and his tenure of life is feeble; he has earned money, sir, in my service—sixty pounds and more—it is all his children have to look to—all: but for that, in the event of his death, they would be houseless beggars in the street. And what have I done for that family, sir? I have put that money out of the reach of Robert Gates, and placed it so that it shall be a blessing to his family at his death. Every farthing is invested in shares in this office; and Robert Gates, my lodge-porter, is a holder of three shares in the West Diddlesex Association, and, in that capacity, your master and mine. Do you think I want to *cheat* Gates?"

"Oh, sir!" says I.

"To cheat that poor helpless man, and those tender, innocent children? You can't think so, sir; I should be a disgrace to human nature if I did. But what boots all my energy and perseverance? What though I place my friends' money, my family's money, my own money—my hopes, wishes, desires, ambitions—all upon this enterprise? You young men will not do so. You whom I treat with love and confidence as my children, make no return to *me*. When I toil, you remain still; when I struggle, you look on. Say the word at once—you *doubt* me! O heavens, that *this* should be the reward of all my care and love for you!"

Here Mr. Brough was so affected that he actually burst into tears, and I confess I saw in its true light the negligence of which I had been guilty.

"Sir," says I, "I am very—very sorry; it was a matter of delicacy, rather than otherwise, which induced me not to speak to my aunt about the West Diddlesex."

"Delicacy, my dear, dear boy—as if there can be any

delicacy about making your aunt's fortune! Say indifference to me, say ingratitude, say folly, but don't say delicacy —no, no, not delicacy. Be honest, my boy, and call things by their right names—always do."

"It *was* folly and ingratitude, Mr. Brough," says I. "I see it all now; and I'll write to my aunt this very post."

"You had better do no such thing," says Brough bitterly. "The stocks are at ninety, and Mrs. Hoggarty can get three per cent. for her money."

"I *will* write, sir—upon my word and honour, I will write."

"Well, as your honour is passed, you must, I suppose; for never break your word—no, not in a trifle, Titmarsh. Send me up the letter when you have done, and I'll frank it—upon my word and honour I will," says Mr. Brough, laughing, and holding out his hand to me.

I took it, and he pressed mine very kindly. "You may as well sit down here," says he, as he kept hold of it; "there is plenty of paper."

And so I sat down and mended a beautiful pen, and began and wrote, "Independent West Diddlesex Association, June, 1822," and "My dear Aunt," in the best manner possible. Then I paused a little, thinking what I should next say; for I have always found that difficulty about letters. The date, and my dear so-and-so, one writes off immediately —it is the next part which is hard; and I put my pen in my mouth, flung myself back in my chair, and began to think about it.

"Bah!" said Brough, "are you going to be about that letter all day, my good fellow? Listen to me, and I'll dictate to you in a moment." So he began:—

"My dear Aunt,—Since my return from Somersetshire, I am very happy indeed to tell you that I have so pleased the managing director of our Association and the Board, that they have been good enough to appoint me third clerk——"

"Sir!" says I.

"Write what I say. Mr. Roundhand, as has been agreed by the Board yesterday, quits the clerk's desk, and takes the title of secretary and actuary. Mr. Highmore takes his

place; Mr. Abednego follows him; and I place you as third clerk—as

"third clerk (write), with a salary of £150 per annum. This news will, I know, gratify my dear mother and you, who have been a second mother to me all my life.

"When I was last at home, I remember you consulted me as to the best mode of laying out a sum of money which was lying useless in your bankers' hands. I have since lost no opportunity of gaining what information I could; and situated here as I am, in the very midst of affairs, I believe, although very young, I am as good a person to apply to as many others of greater age and standing.

"I frequently thought of mentioning to you our Association, but feelings of delicacy prevented me from doing so. I did not wish that any one should suppose that a shadow of self-interest could move me in any way.

"But I believe, without any sort of doubt, that the West Diddlesex Association offers the best security that you can expect for your capital, and, at the same time, the highest interest you can anywhere procure.

"The situation of the Company, as I have it from *the very best authority* (underline that), is as follows:—

"The subscribed and *bonâ-fide* capital is FIVE MILLIONS STERLING.

"The body of directors you know. Suffice it to say that the managing director is John Brough, Esq., of the firm of Brough and Hoff, a Member of Parliament, and a man as well known as Mr. Rothschild in the city of London. His private fortune, I know for a fact, amounts to half a million; and the last dividends paid to the shareholders of the I. W. D. Association amounted to 6⅛ per cent. per annum."

[That I know was the dividend declared by us.]

"Although the shares in the market are at a very great premium, it is the privilege of the four first clerks to dispose of a certain number, £5,000 each at par; and if you, my dearest aunt, would wish for £2,500 worth, I hope you will allow me to oblige you by offering you so much of my new privileges.

"Let me hear from you immediately upon the subject, as I have already an offer for the whole amount of my shares at market price."

"But I haven't, sir," says I.

"You have, sir. *I* will take the shares; but I want *you*. I want as many respectable persons in the company as I can bring. I want you because I like you, and I don't mind telling you that I have views of my own as well; for I am an honest man and say openly what I mean, and I'll tell you *why* I want you. I can't, by the regulations of the company, have more than a certain number of votes; but if your aunt takes shares, I expect—I don't mind owning it—that she will vote with me. *Now* do you understand me? My object is to be all in all with the company; and if I be, I will make it the most glorious enterprise that ever was conducted in the city of London."

So I signed the letter, and left it with Mr. B. to frank.

The next day I went and took my place at the third clerk's desk, being led to it by Mr. B., who made a speech to the gents, much to the annoyance of the other chaps, who grumbled about their services; though, as for the matter of that, our services were very much alike: the company was only three years old, and the oldest clerk in it had not six months' more standing in it than I. "Look out," said that envious M'Whirter to me. "Have you got money, or have any of your relations money? or are any of them going to put it into the concern?"

I did not think fit to answer him, but took a pinch out of his mull, and was always kind to him; and he, to say the truth, was always most civil to me. As for Gus Hoskins, he began to think I was a superior being; and I must say that the rest of the chaps behaved very kindly in the matter, and said that if one man were to be put over their heads before another, they would have pitched upon me, for I had never harmed any of them, and done little kindnesses to several.

"I know," says Abednego, "how you got the place. It was I who got it you. I told Brough you were a cousin of Preston's, the Lord of the Treasury—had venison from him,

and all that; and depend upon it he expects that you will be able to do him some good in that quarter."

I think there was some likelihood in what Abednego said, because our governor, as we called him, frequently spoke to me about my cousin; told me to push the concern in the West End of the town, get as many noblemen as we could to insure with us, and so on. It was in vain I said that I could do nothing with Mr. Preston. "Bah! bah!" says Mr. Brough, "don't tell *me*. People don't send haunches of venison to you for nothing;" and I'm convinced he thought I was a very cautious, prudent fellow, for not bragging about my great family, and keeping my connection with them a secret. To be sure he might have learned the truth from Gus, who lived with me; but Gus would insist that I was hand in glove with all the nobility, and boasted about me ten times as much as I did myself.

The chaps used to call me the "West Ender."

"See," thought I, "what I have gained by Aunt Hoggarty giving me a diamond-pin! What a lucky thing it is that she did not give me the money, as I hoped she would! Had I not had the pin—had I even taken it to any other person but Mr. Polonius—Lady Drum would never have noticed me; had Lady Drum never noticed me, Mr. Brough never would, and I never should have been third clerk of the West Diddlesex."

I took heart at all this, and wrote off on the very evening of my appointment to my dearest Mary Smith, giving her warning that a "certain event," for which one of us was longing very earnestly, might come off sooner than we had expected. And why not? Miss S.'s own fortune was £70 a year, mine was £150, and when we had £300, we always vowed we would marry. "Ah!" thought I, "if I could but go to Somersetshire now, I might boldly walk up to old Smith's door" (he was her grandfather, and a half-pay lieutenant of the navy); "I might knock at the knocker and see my beloved Mary in the parlour, and not be obliged to sneak behind hayricks on the look-out for her, or pelt stones at midnight at her window."

My aunt, in a few days, wrote a pretty gracious reply to my letter. She had not determined, she said, as to the manner

in which she should employ her three thousand pounds, but should take my offer into consideration, begging me to keep my shares open for a little while, until her mind was made up.

What, then, does Mr. Brough do? I learned afterwards, in the year 1830, when he and the West Diddlesex Association had disappeared altogether, how he had proceeded.

"Who are the attorneys at Slopperton?" says he to me in a careless way.

"Mr. Ruck, sir," says I, "is the Tory solicitor, and Messrs. Hodge and Smithers the Liberals." I knew them very well, for the fact is, before Mary Smith came to live in our parts, I was rather partial to Miss Hodge and her great gold-coloured ringlets; but Mary came and soon put *her* nose out of joint, as the saying is.

"And you are of what politics?"

"Why, sir, we are Liberals." I was rather ashamed of this, for Mr. Brough was an out-and-out Tory; but Hodge and Smithers is a most respectable firm. I brought up a packet from them to Hickson, Dixon, Paxton, and Jackson, *our* solicitors, who are their London correspondents.

Mr. Brough only said, "Oh, indeed!" and did not talk any further on the subject, but began admiring my diamond-pin very much.

"Titmarsh, my dear boy," says he, "I have a young lady at Fulham who is worth seeing, I assure you, and who has heard so much about you from her father (for I like you, my boy, I don't care to own it) that she is rather anxious to see you too. Suppose you come down to us for a week? Abednego will do your work."

"Law, sir! you are very kind," says I.

"Well, you shall come down; and I hope you will like my claret. But hark ye! I don't think, my dear fellow, you are quite smart enough—quite well enough dressed. Do you understand me?"

"I've my blue coat and brass buttons at home, sir."

"What! that thing with the waist between your shoulders that you wore at Mrs. Brough's party?" (It *was* rather high-waisted, being made in the country two years before.) "No—no, that will never do. Get some new clothes, sir—two new suits of clothes."

"Sir!" says I, "I'm already, if the truth must be told, very short of money for this quarter, and can't afford myself a new suit for a long time to come."

"Pooh, pooh! don't let that annoy you. Here's a ten-pound note—but no, on second thoughts, you may as well go to my tailor's. I'll drive you down there; and never mind the bill, my good lad!" And drive me down he actually did, in his grand coach-and-four, to Mr. Von Stiltz, in Clifford Street, who took my measure, and sent me home two of the finest coats ever seen, a dress-coat and a frock, a velvet waistcoat, a silk ditto, and three pairs of pantaloons, of the most beautiful make. Brough told me to get some boots and pumps, and silk stockings for evenings; so that when the time came for me to go down to Fulham, I appeared as handsome as any young nobleman, and Gus said that "I looked, by jingo, like a regular tip-top swell."

In the meantime the following letter had been sent down to Hodge and Smithers:—

"Ram Alley, Cornhill, London,
July, 1822.

"Dear Sirs,—

* * * * *

This part being on private affairs
relative to the cases of
Dixon *v.* Haggerstony,
Snodgrass *v.* Rubbidge and another,
I am not permitted
to extract.

* * * * *

"Likewise we beg to hand you a few more prospectuses of the Independent West Diddlesex Fire and Life Assurance Company, of which we have the honour to be the solicitors in London. We wrote to you last year, requesting you to accept the Slopperton and Somerset agency for the same, and have been expecting for some time back that either shares or assurances should be effected by you.

"The capital of the Company, as you know, is five millions sterling (say £5,000,000), and we are in a situation to offer more than the usual commission to our agents of the legal profession. We shall be happy to give a premium of 6 per

cent. for shares to the amount of £1,000, 6½ per cent. above a thousand, to be paid immediately upon the taking of the shares.—I am, dear Sirs, for self and partners,

"Yours most faithfully,

"SAMUEL JACKSON."

This letter, as I have said, came into my hands some time afterwards. I knew nothing of it in the year 1822, when, in my new suit of clothes, I went down to pass a week at the Rookery, Fulham, residence of John Brough, Esq., M.P.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW SAMUEL TITMARSH REACHED THE HIGHEST POINT OF PROSPERITY.

IF I had the pen of a George Robins, I might describe the Rookery properly. Suffice it, however, to say, it is a very handsome country place, with handsome lawns sloping down to the river, handsome shrubberies and conservatories, fine stables, out-houses, kitchen-gardens, and everything belonging to a first-rate *rus in urbe*, as the great auctioneer called it when he hammered it down some years after.

I arrived on a Saturday at half an hour before dinner. A grave gentleman out of livery showed me to my room; a man in a chocolate coat and gold lace, with Brough's crest on the buttons, brought me a silver shaving-pot of hot water on a silver tray; and a grand dinner was ready at six, at which I had the honour of appearing in Von Stiltz's dress-coat and my new silk stockings and pumps.

Brough took me by the hand as I came in, and presented me to his lady, a stout, fair-haired woman in light-blue satin; then to his daughter, a tall, thin, dark-eyed girl with beetle-brows, looking very ill-natured, and about eighteen.

"Belinda, my love," said her papa, "this young gentleman is one of my clerks, who was at our ball."

"Oh, indeed!" says Belinda, tossing up her head.

"But not a common clerk, Miss Belinda; so, if you please, we will have none of your aristocratic airs with him.

He is a nephew of the Countess of Drum; and I hope he will soon be very high in our establishment, and in the city of London."

At the name of Countess (I had a dozen times rectified the error about our relationship), Miss Belinda made a low curtsy, and stared at me very hard, and said she would try and make the Rookery pleasant to any friend of papa's. We have not much *monde* to-day," continued Miss Brough, "and are only in *petit comité*; but I hope before you leave us you will see some *société* that will make your *séjour* agreeable."

I saw at once that she was a fashionable girl, from her using the French language in this way.

"Isn't she a fine girl?" said Brough, whispering to me, and evidently as proud of her as a man could be. "Isn't she a fine girl—eh, you dog? Do you see breeding like that in Somersetshire?"

"No, sir, upon my word!" answered I, rather shyly; for I was thinking all the while how "Somebody" was a thousand times more beautiful, simple, and lady-like.

"And what has my dearest love been doing all day?" said her papa.

"Oh, Pa! I have *pincé*'d the harp a little to Captain Fizgig's flute. Didn't I, Captain Fizgig?"

Captain the Hon. Francis Fizgig said, "Yes, Brough, your fair daughter *pincé*'d the harp, and *touché*'d the piano, and *égratigné*'d the guitar, and *écorché*'d a song or two; and we had the pleasure of a *promenade à l'eau*—of a walk upon the water."

"Law, captain!" cries Mrs. Brough, "walk on the water?"

"Hush, mamma, you don't understand French!" says Miss Belinda, with a sneer.

"It's a sad disadvantage, madam," says Fizgig gravely; "and I recommend you and Brough here, who are coming out in the great world, to have some lessons; or at least get up a couple of dozen phrases, and introduce them into your conversation here and there. I suppose, sir, you speak it commonly at the office, or what you call it?" And Mr. Fizgig put his glass into his eye and looked at me.

"We speak English, sir," says I, "knowing it better than French."

"Everybody has not had your opportunities, Miss Brough," continued the gentleman. "Everybody has not *voyagé* like *nous autres*, hey? *Mais que voulez-vous*, my good sir? you must stick to your cursed ledgers and things. What's the French for ledger, Miss Belinda?"

"How can you ask? *Je n'en sçais rien*, I'm sure."

"You should learn, Miss Brough," said her father. "The daughter of a British merchant need not be ashamed of the means by which her father gets his bread. *I'm* not ashamed —I'm not proud. Those who know John Brough, know that ten years ago he was a poor clerk like my friend Titmarsh here, and is now worth half a million. Is there any man in the House better listened to than John Brough? Is there any Duke in the land that can give a better dinner than John Brough; or a larger fortune to his daughter than John Brough? Why, sir, the humble person now speaking to you could buy out many a German duke! But I'm not proud— no, no, not proud. There's my daughter—look at her—when I die she will be mistress of my fortune; but am I proud? No! Let him who can win her marry her, that's what I say. Be it you, Mr. Fizgig, son of a peer of the realm; or you, Bill Tidd. Be it a duke or a shoeblack, what do I care, hey?— what do I care?"

"O-o-oh!" sighed the gent who went by the name of Bill Tidd, a very pale young man, with a black riband round his neck instead of a handkerchief, and his collars turned down like Lord Byron. He was leaning against the mantelpiece, and with a pair of great green eyes ogling Miss Brough with all his might.

"Oh, John—my dear John!" cried Mrs. Brough, seizing her husband's hand and kissing it, "you are an angel, that you are!"

"Isabella, don't flatter me; I'm a *man*—a plain, downright citizen of London, without a particle of pride, except in you and my daughter here—my two Bells, as I call them! This is the way that we live, Titmarsh, my boy; ours is a happy, humble, Christian home, and that's all. Isabella, leave go my hand!"

"Mamma, you mustn't do so before company; it's odious!" shrieked Miss B.; and mamma quietly let the hand

fall, and heaved from her ample bosom a great large sigh. I felt a liking for that simple woman, and a respect for Brough too. He *couldn't* be a bad man, whose wife loved him so.

Dinner was soon announced, and I had the honour of leading in Miss B., who looked back rather angrily, I thought, at Captain Fizgig, because that gentleman had offered his arm to Mrs. Brough. He sat on the right of Mrs. Brough, and Miss flounced down on the seat next to him, leaving me and Mr. Tidd to take our places at the opposite side of the table.

At dinner there was turbot and soup first, and boiled turkey afterwards, of course. How is it that at all the great dinners they have this perpetual boiled turkey? It was real turtle-soup—the first time I had ever tasted it; and I remarked how Mrs. B., who insisted on helping it, gave all the green lumps of fat to her husband, and put several slices of the breast of the bird under the body, until it came to his turn to be helped.

"I'm a plain man," says John, "and eat a plain dinner. I hate your kickshaws, though I keep a French cook for those who are not of my way of thinking. I'm no egotist, look you; I've no prejudices; and Miss there has her bechamels and fallals according to her taste. Captain, try the *volly vong*."

We had plenty of champagne and old Madeira with dinner, and great silver tankards of porter, which those might take who chose. Brough made especially a boast of drinking beer; and, when the ladies retired, said, "Gentlemen, Tiggins will give you an unlimited supply of wine; there's no stinting here;" and then laid himself down in his easy-chair and fell asleep.

"He always does so," whispered Mr. Tidd to me.

"Get some of that yellow-sealed wine, Tiggins," says the captain. "That other claret we had yesterday is loaded, and disagrees with me infernally!"

I must say I liked the yellow seal much better than Aunt Hoggarty's Rosolio.

I soon found out what Mr. Tidd was, and what he was longing for.

"Isn't she a glorious creature?" says he to me.

"Who, sir?" says I.

"Miss Belinda, to be sure!" cried Tidd. "Did mortal ever look upon eyes like hers, or view a more sylph-like figure?"

"She might have a little more flesh, Mr. Tidd," says the captain, "and a little less eyebrow. They look vicious, those scowling eyebrows, in a girl. *Qu'en dites-vous*, Mr. Titmarsh, as Miss Brough would say?"

"I think it remarkably good claret, sir," says I.

"Egad, you're the right sort of fellow!" says the captain. "*Volto chiuso*, eh? You respect our sleeping host yonder?"

"That I do, sir, as the first man in the city of London, and my managing director."

"And so do I," says Tidd; "and this day fortnight, when I'm of age, I'll prove my confidence too."

"As how?" says I.

"Why, sir, you must know that I come into—ahem—a considerable property, sir, on the 14th of July, which my father made—in business."

"Say at once he was a tailor, Tidd."

"He *was* a tailor, sir; but what of that? I've had a university education, and have the feelings of a gentleman—as much, ay, perhaps, and more, than some members of an effete aristocracy."

"Tidd, don't be severe!" says the captain, drinking a tenth glass.

"Well, Mr. Titmarsh, when of age, I come into a considerable property; and Mr. Brough has been so good as to say he can get me twelve hundred a year for my twenty thousand pounds, and I have promised to invest them."

"In the West Diddlesex, sir?" says I—"in our office?"

"No, in another company, of which Mr. Brough is director, and quite as good a thing. Mr. Brough is a very old friend of my family, sir, and he has taken a great liking to me; and he says that with my talents I ought to get into Parliament, and then—and then! after I have laid out my patrimony, I may look to *matrimony*, you see!"

"Oh, you designing dog!" said the captain. "When I used to lick you at school, who ever would have thought that I was thrashing a sucking statesman?"

"Talk away, boys," said Brough, waking out of his sleep; "I only sleep with half an eye, and hear you all. Yes, you shall get into Parliament, Tidd, my man, or my name's not Brough! You shall have six per cent. for your money, or never believe me! But as for my daughter—ask *her*, and not me. You, or the captain, or Titmarsh, may have her, if you can get her. All I ask in a son-in-law is, that he should be, as every one of you is, an honourable and high-minded man!"

Tidd at this looked very knowing; and as our host sank off to sleep again, pointed archly at his eyebrows, and wagged his head at the captain.

"Bah!" says the captain. "I say what I think; and you may tell Miss Brough if you like." And so presently this conversation ended, and we were summoned in to coffee. After which the captain sang songs with Miss Brough; Tidd looked at her and said nothing; I looked at prints; and Mrs. Brough sat knitting stockings for the poor. The captain was sneering openly at Miss Brough and her affected ways and talk; but in spite of his bullying, contemptuous way, I thought she seemed to have a great regard for him, and to bear his scorn very meekly.

At twelve Captain Fizgig went off to his barracks at Knightsbridge, and Tidd and I to our rooms. Next day being Sunday, a great bell woke us at eight; and at nine we all assembled in the breakfast-room, where Mr. Brough read prayers, a chapter, and made an exhortation afterwards, to us and all the members of the household—except the French cook, Monsieur Nongtongpaw, whom I could see, from my chair, walking about in the shrubberies in his white night-cap, smoking a cigar.

Every morning on week-days, punctually at eight, Mr. Brough went through the same ceremony, and had his family to prayers; but though this man was a hypocrite, as I found afterwards, I'm not going to laugh at the family prayers, or say he was a hypocrite *because* he had them. There are many bad and good men who don't go through the ceremony at all; but I am sure the good men would be the better for it, and am not called upon to settle the question with respect to the bad ones; and therefore I have passed over a great deal

of the religious part of Mr. Brough's behaviour. Suffice it, that religion was always on his lips; that he went to church thrice every Sunday, when he had not a party; and if he did not talk religion with us when we were alone, had a great deal to say upon the subject upon occasions, as I found one day when we had a Quaker and Dissenter party to dine, and when his talk was as grave as that of any minister present. Tidd was not there that day, for nothing could make him forsake his Byron riband or refrain from wearing his collars turned down; so Tidd was sent with the buggy to Astley's. "And hark ye, Titmarsh, my boy," said he, "leave your diamond-pin upstairs: our friends to-day don't like such gew-gaws; and though for my part I am no enemy to harmless ornaments, yet I would not shock the feelings of those who have sterner opinions. You will see that my wife and Miss Brough consult my wishes in this respect." And so they did; for they both came down to dinner in black gowns and tippets, whereas Miss B. had commonly her dress half off her shoulders.

The captain rode over several times to see us, and Miss Brough seemed always delighted to see *him*. One day I met him as I was walking out alone by the river, and we had a long talk together.

"Mr. Titmarsh," says he, "from what little I have seen of you, you seem to be an honest, straight-minded young fellow, and I want some information that you can give. Tell me, in the first place, if you will—and upon my honour it shall go no farther—about this Insurance Company of yours? You are in the city, and see how affairs are going on. Is your concern a stable one?"

"Sir," said I, "frankly then, and upon my honour too, I believe it is. It has been set up only four years, it is true; but Mr. Brough had a great name when it was established, and a vast connection. Every clerk in the office has, to be sure, in a manner paid for his place, either by taking shares himself, or by his relations taking them. I got mine because my mother, who is very poor, devoted a small sum of money that came to us to the purchase of an annuity for herself and a provision for me. The matter was debated by the family and our attorneys, Messrs. Hodge and Smithers, who are

very well known in our part of the country; and it was agreed on all hands that my mother could not do better with her money for all of us than invest it in this way. Brough alone is worth half a million of money, and his name is a host in itself. Nay, more: I wrote the other day to an aunt of mine, who has a considerable sum of money in loose cash, and who had consulted me as to the disposal of it, to invest it in our office. Can I give you any better proof of my opinion of its solvency?"

"Did Brough persuade you in any way?"

"Yes, he certainly spoke to me; but he very honestly told me his motives, and tells them to us all as honestly. He says, 'Gentlemen, it is my object to increase the connection of the office as much as possible. I want to crush all the other offices in London. Our terms are lower than any office, and we can bear to have them lower, and a great business will come to us that way. But we must work ourselves as well. Every single shareholder and officer of the establishment must exert himself, and bring us customers—no matter for how little they are engaged, engage them: that is the great point.' And accordingly our director makes all his friends and servants shareholders—his very lodge-porter yonder is a shareholder; and he thus endeavours to fasten upon all whom he comes near. I, for instance, have just been appointed over the heads of our gents, to a much better place than I held. I am asked down here, and entertained royally; and why? Because my aunt has three thousand pounds which Mr. Brough wants her to invest with us."

"That looks awkward, Mr. Titmarsh."

"Not a whit, sir; he makes no disguise of the matter. When the question is settled one way or the other, I don't believe Mr. Brough will take any further notice of me. But he wants me now. This place happened to fall in just at the very moment when he had need of me; and he hopes to gain over my family through me. He told me as much as we drove down. 'You are a man of the world, Titmarsh,' said he; 'you know that I don't give you this place because you are an honest fellow, and write a good hand. If I had had a lesser bribe to offer you at the moment, I should only

have given you that; but I had no choice, and gave you what was in my power.'"

"That's fair enough; but what can make Brough so eager for such a small sum as three thousand pounds?"

"If it had been ten, sir, he would have been not a bit more eager. You don't know the city of London, and the passion which our great men in the share-market have for increasing their connection. Mr. Brough, sir, would canvass and wheedle a chimney-sweep in the way of business. See, here is poor Tidd and his twenty thousand pounds. Our director has taken possession of him just in the same way. He wants all the capital he can lay his hands on."

"Yes, and suppose he runs off with the capital?"

"Mr. Brough of the firm of Brough and Hoff, sir? Suppose the Bank of England runs off! But here we are at the lodge-gate. Let's ask Gates, another of Mr. Brough's victims." And we went in and spoke to old Gates.

"Well, Mr. Gates," says I, beginning the matter cleverly, "you are one of my masters, you know, at the West Diddlesex yonder?"

"Yees, sure," says old Gates, grinning. He was a retired servant, with a large family come to him in his old age.

"May I ask you what your wages are, Mr. Gates, that you can lay by so much money, and purchase shares in our company?"

Gates told us his wages; and when we inquired whether they were paid regularly, swore that his master was the kindest gentleman in the world; that he had put two of his daughters into service, two of his sons to charity-schools, made one apprentice, and narrated a hundred other benefits that he had received from the family. Mrs. Brough clothed half the children; master gave them blankets and coats in winter, and soup and meat all the year round. There never was such a generous family sure since the world began.

"Well, sir," said I to the captain, "does that satisfy you? Mr. Brough gives to these people fifty times as much as he gains from them; and yet he makes Mr. Gates take shares in our company."

"Mr. Titmarsh," says the captain, "you are an honest fellow, and I confess your argument sounds well. Now

tell me, do you know anything about Miss Brough and her fortune?"

"Brough will leave her everything—or says so." But I suppose the captain saw some particular expression in my countenance, for he laughed and said,—

"I suppose, my dear fellow, you think she's dear at the price. Well, I don't know that you are far wrong."

"Why then, if I may make so bold, Captain Fizgig, are you always at her heels?"

"Mr. Titmarsh," says the captain, "I owe twenty thousand pounds;" and he went back to the house directly and proposed for her.

I thought this rather cruel and unprincipled conduct on the gentleman's part; for he had been introduced to the family by Mr. Tidd, with whom he had been at school, and had supplanted Tidd entirely in the great heiress's affections. Brough stormed, and actually swore at his daughter (as the captain told me afterwards) when he heard that the latter had accepted Mr. Fizgig; and at last, seeing the captain, made him give his word that the engagement should be kept secret for a few months. And Captain F. only made a confidant of me, and the mess, as he said; but this was after Tidd had paid his twenty thousand pounds over to our governor, which he did punctually when he came of age. The same day, too, he proposed for the young lady, and I need not say was rejected. Presently the captain's engagement began to be whispered about, and all his great relations, the Duke of Doncaster, the Earl of Cinqbars, the Earl of Crabs, etc., came and visited the Brough family; the Hon. Henry Ringwood became a shareholder in our company, and the Earl of Crabs offered to be. Our shares rose to a premium; our director, his lady, and daughter were presented at Court; and the great West Diddlesex Association bid fair to be the first assurance office in the kingdom.

A very short time after my visit to Fulham, my dear aunt wrote to me to say that she had consulted with her attorneys, Messrs. Hodge and Smithers, who strongly recommended that she should invest the sum as I advised. She had the sum invested, too, in my name, paying me many compliments upon my honesty and talent, of which, she said, Mr.

Brough had given her the most flattering account. And at the same time my aunt informed me that at her death the shares should be my own. This gave me a great weight in the company, as you may imagine. At our next annual meeting I attended in my capacity as a shareholder, and had great pleasure in hearing Mr. Brough, in a magnificent speech, declare a dividend of six per cent., that we all received over the counter.

"You lucky young scoundrel!" said Brough to me, "do you know what made me give you your place?"

"Why, my aunt's money, to be sure, sir," said I.

"No such thing. Do you fancy I cared for those paltry three thousand pounds? I was told you were nephew of Lady Drum; and Lady Drum is grandmother of Lady Jane Preston; and Mr. Preston is a man who can do us a world of good. I knew that they had sent you venison, and the deuce knows what; and when I saw Lady Jane at my party shake you by the hand, and speak to you so kindly, I took all Abednego's tales for gospel. *That* was the reason you got the place, mark you, and not on account of your miserable three thousand pounds. Well, sir, a fortnight after you was with us at Fulham, I met Preston in the House, and made a merit of having given the place to his cousin. 'Confound the insolent scoundrel!' said he; '*he* my cousin! I suppose you take all old Drum's stories for true? Why, man, it's her mania: she never is introduced to a man but she finds out a cousinship, and would not fail, of course, with that cur of a Titmarsh!' 'Well,' said I, laughing, 'that cur has got a good place in consequence, and the matter can't be mended.' So you see," continued our director, "that you were indebted to your place, not to your aunt's money, but——"

"But to MY AUNT'S DIAMOND-PIN!"

"Lucky rascal!" said Brough, poking me in the side, and going out of the way. And lucky, in faith, I thought I was.

CHAPTER VIII.

RELATES THE HAPPIEST DAY OF SAMUEL TITMARSH'S LIFE.

I DON'T know how it was that in the course of the next six months Mr. Roundhand, the actuary, who had been such a profound admirer of Mr. Brough and the West Diddlesex Association, suddenly quarrelled with both, and taking his money out of the concern, he disposed of his £5,000 worth of shares to a pretty good profit, and went away, speaking everything that was evil both of the company and the director.

Mr. Highmore now became secretary and actuary, Mr. Abednego was first clerk, and your humble servant was second in the office, at a salary of £200 a year. How unfounded were Mr. Roundhand's aspersions of the West Diddlesex appeared quite clearly at our meeting in January, 1823, when our chief director, in one of the most brilliant speeches ever heard, declared that the half-yearly dividend was £4 per cent., at the rate of £8 per cent. per annum; and I sent to my aunt £120 sterling as the amount of the interest of the stock in my name.

My excellent aunt, Mrs. Hoggarty, delighted beyond measure, sent me back £10 for my own pocket, and asked me if she had not better sell Slopperton and Squashtail, and invest all her money in this admirable concern.

On this point I could not surely do better than ask the opinion of Mr. Brough. Mr. B. told me that shares could not be had but at a premium; but on my representing that I knew of £5,000 worth in the market at par, he said, "Well, if so, he would like a fair price for his, and would not mind disposing of £5,000 worth, as he had rather a glut of West Diddlesex shares, and his other concerns wanted feeding with ready money." At the end of our conversation, of which I promised to report the purport to Mrs. Hoggarty, the director was so kind as to say that he had determined on creating a place of private secretary to the managing director, and that I should hold that office with an additional salary of £50.

I had £250 a year, Miss Smith had £70 per annum to

her fortune. What had I said should be my line of conduct whenever I could realize £300 a year?

Gus, of course, and all the gents in our office through him, knew of my engagement with Mary Smith. Her father had been a commander in the navy, and a very distinguished officer; and though Mary, as I have said, only brought me a fortune of £70 a year, and I, as everybody said, in my present position in the office and the city of London, might have reasonably looked out for a lady with much more money, yet my friends agreed that the connection was very respectable, and I was content—as who would not have been with such a darling as Mary? I am sure, for my part, I would not have taken the Lord Mayor's own daughter in place of Mary, even with a plum to her fortune.

Mr. Brough of course was made aware of my approaching marriage, as of everything else relating to every clerk in the office; and I do believe Abednego told him what we had for dinner every day. Indeed, his knowledge of our affairs was wonderful.

He asked me how Mary's money was invested. It was in the three per cent. consols—£2,333, 6s. 8d.

"Remember," says he, "my lad, Mrs. Sam Titmarsh that is to be may have seven per cent. for her money at the very least, and on better security than the Bank of England; for is not a Company of which John Brough is the head better than any other Company in England?" And to be sure I thought he was not far wrong, and promised to speak to Mary's guardians on the subject before our marriage. Lieutenant Smith, her grandfather, had been at the first very much averse to our union. (I must confess that, one day finding me alone with her, and kissing, I believe, the tips of her little fingers, he had taken me by the collar and turned me out of doors.) But Sam Titmarsh, with a salary of £250 a year, a promised fortune of £150 more, and the right-hand man of Mr. John Brough of London, was a very different man from Sam the poor clerk, and the poor clergyman's widow's son; and the old gentleman wrote me a kind letter enough, and begged me to get him six pairs of lamb's-wool stockings and four ditto waistcoats from Romanis', and accepted them, too, as a present from me when I went

down in June—in happy June of 1823—to fetch my dear Mary away.

Mr. Brough was likewise kindly anxious about my aunt's Slopperton and Squashtail property, which she had not as yet sold, as she talked of doing; and as Mr. B. represented, it was a sin and a shame that any person in whom he took such interest, as he did in all the relatives of his dear young friend, should only have three per cent. for her money, when she could have eight elsewhere. He always called me Sam now, praised me to the other young men (who brought the praises regularly to me), said there was a cover always laid for me at Fulham, and repeatedly took me thither. There was but little company when I went; and M'Whirter used to say he only asked me on days when he had his vulgar acquaintances. But I did not care for the great people, not being born in their sphere; and indeed did not much care for going to the house at all. Miss Belinda was not at all to my liking. After her engagement with Captain Fizgig, and after Mr. Tidd had paid his £20,000, and Fizgig's great relations had joined in some of our director's companies, Mr. Brough declared he believed that Captain Fizgig's views were mercenary, and put him to the proof at once, by saying that he must take Miss Brough without a farthing, or not have her at all. Whereupon Captain Fizgig got an appointment in the colonies, and Miss Brough became more ill-humoured than ever. But I could not help thinking she was rid of a bad bargain, and pitying poor Tidd, who came back to the charge again more love-sick than ever, and was rebuffed pitilessly by Miss Belinda. Her father plainly told Tidd, too, that his visits were disagreeable to Belinda; and though he must always love and value him, he begged him to discontinue his calls at the Rookery. Poor fellow! he had paid his £20,000 away for nothing; for what was six per cent. to him compared to six per cent. and the hand of Miss Belinda Brough?

Well, Mr. Brough pitied the poor love-sick swain, as he called me, so much, and felt such a warm sympathy in my well-being, that he insisted on my going down to Somersetshire with a couple of months' leave; and away I went, as happy as a lark, with a couple of brand-new suits from Von Stiltz's in my trunk (I had them made, looking forward to a

certain event), and inside the trunk Lieutenant Smith's fleecy hosiery; wrapping up a parcel of our prospectuses and two letters from John Brough, Esq., to my mother, our worthy annuitant, and to Mrs. Hoggarty, our excellent shareholder. Mr. Brough said I was all that the fondest father could wish, that he considered me as his own boy, and that he earnestly begged Mrs. Hoggarty not to delay the sale of her little landed property, as land was high now and *must fall*; whereas the West Diddlesex Association shares were (comparatively) low, and must inevitably, in the course of a year or two, double, treble, quadruple their present value.

In this way I was prepared, and in this way I took leave of my dear Gus. As we parted in the yard of the Bolt-in-Tun, Fleet Street, I felt that I never should go back to Salisbury Square again, and had made my little present to the landlady's family accordingly. She said I was the respectablest gentleman she had ever had in her house; nor was that saying much, for Bell Lane is in the rules of the Fleet, and her lodgers used commonly to be prisoners on rule from that place. As for Gus, the poor fellow cried and blubbered so that he could not eat a morsel of the muffins and grilled ham with which I treated him for breakfast in the Bolt-in-Tun coffee-house; and when I went away was waving his hat and his handkerchief so in the archway of the coach-office, that I do believe the wheels of the True Blue went over his toes, for I heard him roaring as we passed through the arch. Ah! how different were my feelings as I sat proudly there on the box by the side of Jim Ward, the coachman, to those I had the last time I mounted that coach, parting from my dear Mary and coming to London with my DIAMOND-PIN!

When arrived near home (at Grumpley, three miles from our village, where the True Blue generally stops to take a glass of ale at the Poppleton Arms), it was as if our member, Mr. Poppleton himself, was come into the country, so great was the concourse of people assembled round the inn. And there was the landlord of the inn and all the people of the village. Then there was Tom Wheeler, the post-boy, from Mrs. Rincer's posting-hotel in our town: he was riding on the old bay posters, and they, heaven bless us! were drawing my aunt's yellow chariot, in which she never went out but

thrice in a year, and in which she now sat in her splendid cashmere shawl and a new hat and feather. She waved a white handkerchief out of the window, and Tom Wheeler shouted out "Huzzah!" as did a number of the little blackguard boys of Grumpley, who, to be sure, would huzzah for anything. What a change on Tom Wheeler's part, however! I remembered only a few years before how he had whipped me from the box of the chaise, as I was hanging on for a ride behind.

Next to my aunt's carriage came the four-wheeled chaise of Lieutenant Smith, R.N., who was driving his old fat pony, with his lady by his side. I looked in the back seat of the chaise, and felt a little sad at seeing that *Somebody* was not there. But, O silly fellow! there was Somebody in the yellow chariot with my aunt, blushing like a peony, I declare, and looking so happy!—oh, so happy and pretty! She had a white dress, and a light blue and yellow scarf, which my aunt said were the Hoggarty colours; though what the Hoggartys had to do with light blue and yellow I don't know to this day.

Well, the True Blue guard made a great bellowing on his horn as his four horses dashed away; the boys shouted again; I was placed bodkin between Mrs. Hoggarty and Mary; Tom Wheeler cut into his bays; the lieutenant (who had shaken me cordially by the hand, and whose big dog did not make the slightest attempt at biting me this time) beat his pony till its fat sides lathered again; and thus in this, I may say, unexampled procession, I arrived in triumph at our village.

My dear mother and the girls—Heaven bless them!—nine of them in their nankeen spencers (I had something pretty in my trunk for each of them)—could not afford a carriage, but had posted themselves on the road near the village; and there was such a waving of hands and handkerchiefs; and though my aunt did not much notice them, except by a majestic toss of the head, which is pardonable in a woman of her property, yet Mary Smith did even more than I, and waved her hands as much as the whole nine. Ah! how my dear mother cried and blessed me when we met, and called me her soul's comfort and her darling boy, and looked at me as if I were a paragon of virtue and genius; whereas I was

only a very lucky young fellow, that by the aid of kind friends had stepped rapidly into a very pretty property.

I was not to stay with my mother—that had been arranged beforehand: for though she and Mrs. Hoggarty were not remarkably good friends, yet mother said it was for my benefit that I should stay with my aunt, and so gave up the pleasure of having me with her; and though hers was much the humbler house of the two, I need not say I preferred it far to Mrs. Hoggarty's more splendid one, let alone the horrible Rosolio, of which I was obliged now to drink gallons.

It was to Mrs. H.'s then we were driven. She had prepared a great dinner that evening, and hired an extra waiter; and on getting out of the carriage, she gave a sixpence to Tom Wheeler, saying that was for himself, and that she would settle with Mrs. Rincer for the horses afterwards. At which Tom flung the sixpence upon the ground, swore most violently, and was very justly called by my aunt an "impertinent fellow."

She had taken such a liking to me that she would hardly bear me out of her sight. We used to sit for morning after morning over her accounts, debating for hours together the propriety of selling the Slopperton property; but no arrangement was come to yet about it, for Hodge and Smithers could not get the price she wanted. And, moreover, she vowed that at her decease she would leave every shilling to me.

Hodge and Smithers, too, gave a grand party, and treated me with marked consideration; as did every single person of the village. Those who could not afford to give dinners gave teas, and all drank the health of the young couple; and many a time after dinner or supper was my Mary made to blush by the allusions to the change in her condition.

The happy day for that ceremony was now fixed, and the 24th July, 1823, saw me the happiest husband of the prettiest girl in Somersetshire. We were married from my mother's house, who would insist upon that at any rate, and the nine girls acted as bridesmaids; ay, and Gus Hoskins came from town express to be my groomsman, and had my old room at my mother's, and stayed with her for a week, and cast a sheep's-eye upon Miss Winny Titmarsh too, my dear fourth sister, as I afterwards learned.

My aunt was very kind upon the marriage ceremony, indeed. She had desired me some weeks previous to order three magnificent dresses for Mary from the celebrated Madame Mantalini of London, and some elegant trinkets and embroidered pocket-handkerchiefs from Howell and James's. These were sent down to me, and were to be *my* present to the bride; but Mrs. Hoggarty gave me to understand that I need never trouble myself about the payment of the bill, and I thought her conduct very generous. Also she lent us her chariot for the wedding journey, and made with her own hands a beautiful crimson satin reticule for Mrs. Samuel Titmarsh, her dear niece. It contained a huswife completely furnished with needles, etc.—for she hoped Mrs. Titmarsh would never neglect her needle—and a purse containing some silver pennies, and a very curious pocket-piece. "As long as you keep these, my dear," said Mrs. Hoggarty, "you will never want; and fervently, fervently do I pray that you will keep them." In the carriage pocket we found a paper of biscuits and a bottle of Rosolio. We laughed at this, and made it over to Tom Wheeler, who, however, did not seem to like it much better than we.

I need not say I was married in Mr. Von Stiltz's coat (the third and fourth coats, Heaven help us! in a year), and that I wore sparkling in my bosom the GREAT HOGGARTY DIAMOND.

CHAPTER IX.

BRINGS BACK SAM, HIS WIFE, AUNT, AND DIAMOND, TO LONDON.

We pleased ourselves during the honeymoon with forming plans for our life in London, and a pretty paradise did we build for ourselves! Well, we were but forty years old between us; and, for my part, I never found any harm come of castle-building, but a great deal of pleasure.

Before I left London I had, to say the truth, looked round me for a proper place, befitting persons of our small income; and Gus Hoskins and I, who hunted after office-hours in couples, had fixed on a very snug little cottage in Camden

Town, where there was a garden that certain *small people* might play in when they came; a horse and gig-house, if ever we kept one—and why not, in a few years?—and a fine healthy air, at a reasonable distance from 'Change: all for £30 a year. I had described this little spot to Mary as enthusiastically as Sancho describes Lizias to Don Quixote; and my dear wife was delighted with the prospect of housekeeping there, vowed she would cook all the best dishes herself (especially jam-pudding, of which I confess I am very fond), and promised Gus that he should dine with us at Clematis Bower every Sunday—only he must not smoke those horrid cigars. As for Gus, he vowed he would have a room in the neighbourhood too, for he could not bear to go back to Bell Lane, where we two had been so happy together; and so good-natured Mary said she would ask my sister Winny to come and keep her company. At which Hoskins blushed, and said, "Pooh! nonsense now."

But all our hopes of a happy, snug Clematis Lodge were dashed to the ground on our return from our little honeymoon excursion, when Mrs. Hoggarty informed us that she was sick of the country, and was determined to go to London with her dear nephew and niece, and keep house for them, and introduce them to her friends in the metropolis.

What could we do? We wished her at—Bath, certainly not in London. But there was no help for it, and we were obliged to bring her; for, as my mother said, if we offended her, her fortune would go out of our family, and were we two young people not likely to want it?

So we came to town rather dismally in the carriage, posting the whole way; for the carriage must be brought, and a person of my aunt's rank in life could not travel by the stage. And I had to pay £14 for the posters, which pretty nearly exhausted all my little hoard of cash.

First we went into lodgings—into three sets in three weeks. We quarrelled with the first landlady, because my aunt vowed that she cut a slice off the leg of mutton which was served for our dinner; from the second lodgings we went because aunt vowed the maid would steal the candles; from the third we went because Aunt Hoggarty came down to breakfast the morning after our arrival with her face shockingly swelled and

bitten by—never mind what. To cut a long tale short, I was half mad with the continual choppings and changings, and the long stories and scoldings of my aunt. As for her great acquaintances, none of them were in London; and she made it a matter of quarrel with me that I had not introduced her to John Brough, Esquire, M.P., and to Lord and Lady Tiptoff, her relatives.

Mr. Brough was at Brighton when we arrived in town; and on his return I did not care at first to tell our director that I had brought my aunt with me, or mention my embarrassments for money. He looked rather serious when perforce I spoke of the latter to him and asked for an advance; but when he heard that my lack of money had been occasioned by the bringing of my aunt to London, his tone instantly changed. "That, my dear boy, alters the question; Mrs. Hoggarty is of an age when all things must be yielded to her. Here are a hundred pounds; and I beg you to draw upon me whenever you are in the least in want of money." This gave me breathing-time until she should pay her share of the household expenses. And the very next day, Mr. and Mrs. John Brough, in their splendid carriage-and-four, called upon Mrs. Hoggarty and my wife at our lodgings in Lamb's Conduit Street.

It was on the very day when my poor aunt appeared with her face in that sad condition; and she did not fail to inform Mrs. Brough of the cause, and to state that at Castle Hoggarty, or at her country place in Somersetshire, she had never heard or thought of such vile, odious things.

"Gracious heavens!" shouted John Brough, Esquire, "a lady of your rank to suffer in this way!—the excellent relative of my dear boy Titmarsh! Never, madam—never let it be said that Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty should be subject to such horrible humiliation, while John Brough has a home to offer her—a humble, happy, Christian home, madam; though unlike, perhaps, the splendour to which you have been accustomed in the course of your distinguished career. Isabella, my love!—Belinda! speak to Mrs. Hoggarty. Tell her that John Brough's house is hers from garret to cellar. I repeat it, madam, from garret to cellar. I desire —I insist—I order, that Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty's

trunks should be placed this instant in my carriage! Have the goodness to look to them yourself, Mrs. Titmarsh, and see that your dear aunt's comforts are better provided for than they have been."

Mary went away rather wondering at this order. But, to be sure, Mr. Brough was a great man, and her Samuel's benefactor; and though the silly child absolutely began to cry as she packed and toiled at aunt's enormous valises, yet she performed the work, and came down with a smiling face to my aunt, who was entertaining Mr. and Mrs. Brough with a long and particular account of the balls at the Castle, in Dublin, in Lord Charleville's time.

"I have packed the trunks, aunt, but I am not strong enough to bring them down," said Mary.

"Certainly not, certainly not," said John Brough, perhaps a little ashamed. "Hallo! George, Frederic, Augustus, come upstairs this instant and bring down the trunks of Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty, which this young lady will show you."

Nay, so great was Mr. Brough's condescension, that when some of his fashionable servants refused to meddle with the trunks, he himself seized a pair of them with both hands, carried them to the carriage, and shouted loud enough for all Lamb's Conduit Street to hear, "John Brough is not proud —no, no; and if his footmen are too high and mighty, he'll show them a lesson of humility."

Mrs. Brough was for running downstairs too, and taking the trunks from her husband; but they were too heavy for her, so she contented herself with sitting on one, and asking all persons who passed her whether John Brough was not an angel of a man?

In this way it was that my aunt left us. I was not aware of her departure, for I was at the office at the time; and strolling back at five with Gus, saw my dear Mary smiling and bobbing from the window, and beckoning to us both to come up. This I thought was very strange, because Mrs. Hoggarty could not abide Hoskins, and indeed had told me repeatedly that either she or he must quit the house. Well, we went upstairs, and there was Mary, who had dried her tears, and received us with the most smiling of faces, and

laughed and clapped her hands, and danced, and shook Gus's hand. And what do you think the little rogue proposed? I am blest if she did not say she would like to go to Vauxhall!

As dinner was laid for three persons only, Gus took his seat with fear and trembling; and then Mrs. Sam Titmarsh related the circumstances which had occurred, and how Mrs. Hoggarty had been whisked away to Fulham in Mr. Brough's splendid carriage-and-four. "Let her go," I am sorry to say, said I; and indeed we relished our veal-cutlets and jam-pudding a great deal more than Mrs. Hoggarty did her dinner off plate at the Rookery.

We had a very merry party to Vauxhall, Gus insisting on standing treat; and you may be certain that my aunt, whose absence was prolonged for three weeks, was heartily welcome to remain away, for we were much merrier and more comfortable without her. My little Mary used to make my breakfast before I went to office of mornings; and on Sundays we had a holiday, and saw the dear little children eat their boiled beef and potatoes at the Foundling, and heard the beautiful music. But, beautiful as it is, I think the children were a more beautiful sight still, and the look of their innocent happy faces was better than the best sermon. On week-days Mrs. Titmarsh would take a walk about five o'clock in the evening, on the *left*-hand side of Lamb's Conduit Street (as you go to Holborn)—ay, and sometimes pursue her walk as far as Snow Hill, when two young gents from the I. W. D. Fire and Life were pretty sure to meet her; and then how happily we all trudged off to dinner! Once we came up as a monster of a man, with high heels and a gold-headed cane, and whiskers all over his face, was grinning under Mary's bonnet, and chattering to her, close to Day and Martin's Blacking Manufactory (not near such a handsome thing then as it is now)—there was the man chattering and ogling his best, when who should come up but Gus and I? And in the twinkling of a pegpost, as Lord Duberley says, my gentleman was seized by the collar of his coat and found himself sprawling under a stand of hackney-coaches, where all the watermen were grinning at him. The best of it was, he left his *head of hair and whiskers* in my hand. But Mary said,

"Don't be hard upon him, Samuel; it's only a Frenchman." And so we gave him his wig back, which one of the grinning stable-boys put on and carried to him as he lay in the straw.

He shrieked out something about "arrêtez," and "Français," and "champ-d'honneur;" but we walked on, Gus putting his thumb to his nose and stretching out his fingers at Master Frenchman. This made everybody laugh; and so the adventure ended.

About ten days after my aunt's departure came a letter from her, of which I give a copy:—

"My dear Nephew,—It was my earnest whish e'er this to have returned to London, where I am sure you and my niece Titmarsh miss me very much, and where she, poor thing, quite inexperienced in the ways of 'the great metropulus,' in aconamy, and indeed in every qualaty requasit in a good wife and the mistress of a famaly, can hardly manidge, I am sure, without me.

"Tell her *on no account* to pay more than 6½d. for the prime pieces, 4¾d. for soup meat; and that the very best of London butter is to be had for 8½d.; of course, for pudns and the kitchin you'll employ a commoner sort. My trunks were sadly packed by Mrs. Titmarsh, and the hasp of the portmantyou-lock has gone through my yellow satn. I have darned it, and woar it already twice, at two ellygant (though quiat) evening parties given by my *hospatable* host; and my pegreen velvet on Saturday at a grand dinner, when Lord Scaramouch handed me to table. Everything was in the most *sumptious style*. Soup top and bottom (white and brown), removed by turbit and sammon with *immense boles of lobster-sauce*. Lobsters alone cost 15s. Turbit, three guineas. The hole sammon weighing, I'm sure, 15lbs., and *never seen* at table again; not a bitt of pickled sammon the hole weak afterwards. This kind of extravigance would *just suit* Mrs. Sam Titmarsh, who, as I always say, burns *the candle at both ends*. Well, young people, it is lucky for you you have an old aunt who knows better, and has a long purse; without witch, I dare say, *some* folks would be glad to see her out of doors. I don't mean you, Samuel, who have, I must say,

been a dutiful nephew to me. Well, I daresay I shan't live long, and some folks won't be sorry to have me in my grave.

"Indeed, on Sunday I was taken in my stomick very ill, and thought it might have been the lobster-sauce; but Dr. Blogg, who was called in, said it was, he very much feared, *cumsumptive;* but gave me some pills and a draft w^h^ made me better. Please call upon him—he lives at Pimlico, and you can walk out there after office hours—and present him with £1, 1s., with my compliments. I have no money here but a £10 note, the rest being locked up in my box at Lamb's Cundit Street.

"Although the flesh is not neglected in Mr. B.'s sumptious establishment, I can assure you the *sperrit* is likewise cared for. Mr. B. reads and igspounds every morning; and o but his exorcises refresh the hungry sole before breakfast! Everything is in the handsomest style—silver and goold plate at breakfast, lunch, and dinner; and his crest and motty, a behive, with the Latn word *Industria*, meaning industry, on *everything*—even on the chany juggs and things in my beddroom. On Sunday we were favoured by a special outpouring from the Rev. Grimes Wapshot, of the Amabaptist Congrigation here, and who egshorted for 3 hours in the afternoon in Mr. B.'s private chapel. As the widow of a Hoggarty, I have always been a staunch supporter of the established Church of England and Ireland; but I must say Mr. Wapshot's stirring way was far superior to that of the Rev. Bland Blenkinsop of the Establishment, who lifted up his voice after dinner for a short discourse of two hours.

"Mrs. Brough is, between ourselves, a poor creature, and has no sperrit of her own. As for Miss B., she is so saucy that once I promised to box her years; and would have left the house, had not Mr. B. taken my part, and Miss made me a suitable apollogy.

"I don't know when I shall return to town, being made really so welcome here. Doctor Blogg says the air of Fulham is the best in the world for my simtums; and as the ladies of the house do not choose to walk out with me, the Rev. Grimes Wapshot has often been kind enough to lend me his arm, and 'tis sweet with such a guide to wander both to Putney and Wandsworth, and igsamin the wonderful works

of nature. I have spoke to him about the Slopperton property, and he is not of Mr. B.'s opinion that I should sell it; but on this point I shall follow my own counsel.

"Meantime you must gett into more comfortable lodgings, and lett my bedd be warmed every night, and of rainy days have a fire in the grate; and let Mrs. Titmarsh look up my blew silk dress and turn it against I come; and there is my purple spencer she can have for herself; and I hope she does not wear those three splendid gowns you gave her, but keep them until *better times*. I shall soon introduse her to my friend Mr. Brough, and others of my acquaintances; and am always Your loving AUNT.

"I have ordered a chest of the Rosolio to be sent from Somersetshire. When it comes, please to send half down here (paying the carriage, of course). 'Twill be an acceptable present to my kind entertainer, Mr. B."

This letter was brought to me by Mr. Brough himself at the office, who apologized to me for having broken the seal by inadvertence; for the letter had been mingled with some more of his own, and he opened it without looking at the superscription. Of course he had not read it, and I was glad of that; for I should not have liked him to see my aunt's opinion of his daughter and lady.

The next day a gentleman at "Tom's Coffee-house," Cornhill, sent me word at the office that he wanted particularly to speak to me; and I stepped thither and found my old friend Smithers, of the house of Hodge and Smithers, just off the coach, with his carpet-bag between his legs.

"Sam, my boy," said he, "you are your aunt's heir, and I have a piece of news for you regarding her property which you ought to know. She wrote us down a letter for a chest of that home-made wine of hers which she calls Rosolio, and which lies in our warehouse along with her furniture."

"Well," says I, smiling, "she may part with as much Rosolio as she likes for me. I cede all my right."

"Psha!" says Smithers, "it's not that—though her furniture puts us to a deuced inconvenience, to be sure—it's not that; but in the postscript of her letter she orders us to

advertise the Slopperton and Squashtail estates for immediate sale, as she purposes placing her capital elsewhere."

I knew that the Slopperton and Squashtail property had been the source of a very pretty income to Messrs. Hodge and Smithers, for aunt was always at law with her tenants, and paid dearly for her litigious spirit; so that Mr. Smithers's concern regarding the sale of it did not seem to me to be quite disinterested.

"And did you come to London, Mr. Smithers, expressly to acquaint me with this fact? It seems to me you had much better have obeyed my aunt's instructions at once, or go to her at Fulham and consult with her on this subject."

"'Sdeath, Mr. Titmarsh! don't you see that if she makes a sale of her property, she will hand over the money to Brough; and if Brough gets the money he——"

"Will give her seven per cent. for it instead of three; there's no harm in that."

"But there's such a thing as security, look you. He is a warm man, certainly—very warm—quite respectable—most undoubtedly respectable. But who knows? A panic may take place, and then these five hundred companies in which he is engaged may bring him to ruin. There's the Ginger Beer Company, of which Brough is a director: awkward reports are abroad concerning it. The Consolidated Baffin's Bay Muff and Tippet Company—the shares are down very low, and Brough is a director there. The Patent Pump Company—shares at 65, and a fresh call, which nobody will pay."

"Nonsense, Mr. Smithers! Has not Mr. Brough five hundred thousand pounds' worth of shares in the INDEPENDENT WEST DIDDLESEX, and is THAT at a discount? Who recommended my aunt to invest her money in that speculation, I should like to know?" I had him there.

"Well, well, it is a very good speculation, certainly, and has brought you three hundred a year, Sam my boy; and you may thank us for the interest we took in you (indeed, we loved you as a son, and Miss Hodge has not recovered a certain marriage yet). You don't intend to rebuke us for making your fortune, do you?"

"No, hang it, no!" says I, and shook hands with him,

and accepted a glass of sherry and biscuits which he ordered forthwith.

Smithers returned, however, to the charge. "Sam," he said, "mark my words, and *take your aunt away from the Rookery*. She wrote to Mrs. S. a long account of a reverend gent with whom she walks out there—the Rev. Grimes Wapshot. That man has an eye upon her. He was tried at Lancaster in the year '14 for forgery, and narrowly escaped with his neck. Have a care of him; he has an eye to her money."

"Nay," said I, taking out Mrs. Hoggarty's letter; "read for yourself."

He read it over very carefully, seemed to be amused by it; and as he returned it to me, "Well, Sam," he said, "I have only two favours to ask of you: one is, not to mention that I am in town to any living soul; and the other is to give me a dinner in Lamb's Conduit Street with your pretty wife."

"I promise you both gladly," I said, laughing. "But if you dine with us, your arrival in town must be known, for my friend Gus Hoskins dines with us likewise, and has done so nearly every day since my aunt went."

He laughed, too, and said, "We must swear Gus to secrecy over a bottle." And so we parted till dinner-time.

The indefatigable lawyer pursued his attack after dinner, and was supported by Gus and by my wife, too, who certainly was disinterested in the matter—more than disinterested, for she would have given a great deal to be spared my aunt's company. But she said she saw the force of Mr. Smithers's arguments, and I admitted their justice with a sigh. However, I rode my high horse, and vowed that my aunt should do what she liked with her money, and that I was not the man who would influence her in any way in the disposal of it.

After tea the two gents walked away together, and Gus told me that Smithers had asked him a thousand questions about the office, about Brough, about me and my wife, and everything concerning us. "You are a lucky fellow, Mr. Hoskins, and seem to be the friend of this charming young couple," said Smithers; and Gus confessed he was, and said he had dined with us fifteen times in six weeks, and that a

better and more hospitable fellow than I did not exist. This I state not to trumpet my own praises—no, no, but because these questions of Smithers's had a good deal to do with the subsequent events narrated in this little history.

Being seated at dinner the next day off the cold leg of mutton that Smithers had admired so the day before, and Gus as usual having his legs under our mahogany, a hackney-coach drove up to the door, which we did not much heed; a step was heard on the floor, which we hoped might be for the two-pair lodger, when who should burst into the room but Mrs. Hoggarty herself! Gus, who was blowing the froth off a pot of porter preparatory to a delicious drink of the beverage, and had been making us die of laughing with his stories and jokes, laid down the pewter pot as Mrs. H. came in, and looked quite sick and pale. Indeed we all felt a little uneasy.

My aunt looked haughtily in Mary's face, then fiercely at Gus, and saying, "It is too true, my poor boy—*already!*" flung herself hysterically into my arms, and swore, almost choking, that she would never, never leave me.

I could not understand the meaning of this extraordinary agitation on Mrs. Hoggarty's part, nor could any of us. She refused Mary's hand when the poor thing rather nervously offered it; and when Gus timidly said, "I think, Sam, I'm rather in the way here, and perhaps—had better go," Mrs. H. looked him full in the face, pointed to the door majestically with her forefinger, and said, "I think, sir, you *had* better go."

"I hope Mr. Hoskins will stay as long as he pleases," said my wife, with spirit.

"*Of course* you hope so, madam," answered Mrs. Hoggarty, very sarcastic. But Mary's speech and my aunt's were quite lost upon Gus, for he had instantly run to his hat, and I heard him tumbling downstairs.

The quarrel ended as usual by Mary's bursting into a fit of tears; and by my aunt's repeating the assertion that it was not too late, she trusted; and from that day forth she would never, never leave me.

"What could have made aunt return and be so angry?" said I to Mary that night as we were in our own room; but

"She did not sing, but looked pleased, and said, 'La! sir, what is your business?'

"'My business is with a lady, your respected father's guest in this house.'

"'Oh, Mrs. Hoggarty!' says Miss Brough, flouncing towards the bell and ringing it. 'John, send to Mrs. Hoggarty, in the shrubbery. Here is a gentleman who wants to see her.'

"'I know,' continued I, 'Mrs. Hoggarty's peculiarities as well as any one, madam; and aware that those and her education are not such as to make her a fit companion for you, I know you do not like her. She has written to us in Somersetshire that you do not like her.'

"'What! she has been abusing us to our friends, has she?' cried Miss Brough (it was the very point I wished to insinuate). 'If she does not like us, why does she not leave us?'

"'She *has* made rather a long visit,' said I; 'and I am sure that her nephew and niece are longing for her return. Pray, madam, do not move, for you may aid me in the object for which I come.'

"The object for which I came, sir, was to establish a regular battle-royal between the two ladies; at the end of which I intended to appeal to Mrs. Hoggarty, and say that she ought really no longer to stay in a house with the members of which she had such unhappy differences. Well, sir, the battle-royal was fought—Miss Belinda opening the fire by saying she understood Mrs. Hoggarty had been calumniating her to her friends. But though at the end of it Miss rushed out of the room in a rage, and vowed she would leave her home unless that odious woman left it, your dear aunt said, 'Ha, ha! I know the minx's vile stratagems; but thank Heaven, I have a good heart, and my religion enables me to forgive her. I shall not leave her excellent papa's house, or vex by my departure that worthy, admirable man.'

"I then tried Mrs. H. on the score of compassion. 'Your niece,' said I, 'Mrs. Titmarsh, madam, has been of late, Sam says, rather poorly—qualmish of mornings, madam—a little nervous, and low in spirits—symptoms, madam, that are scarcely to be mistaken in a young married person.'

"Mrs. Hoggarty said she had an admirable cordial that she would send Mrs. Samuel Titmarsh, and she was perfectly certain it would do her good.

"With very great unwillingness I was obliged now to bring my last reserve into the field, and may tell you what that was, Sam, my boy, now that the matter is so long passed. 'Madam,' said I, 'there's a matter about which I must speak, though indeed I scarcely dare. I dined with your nephew yesterday, and met at his table a young man—a young man of low manners, but evidently one who has blinded your nephew, and I too much fear has succeeded in making an impression upon your niece. His name is Hoskins, madam; and when I state that he who was never in the house during your presence there, has dined with your too-confiding nephew sixteen times in three weeks, I may leave you to imagine what I dare not—dare not imagine myself.'

"The shot told. Your aunt bounced up at once, and in ten minutes more was in my carriage, on our way back to London. There, sir, was not *that* generalship?"

"And you played this pretty trick off at my wife's expense, Mr. Smithers?" said I.

"At your wife's expense, certainly; but for the benefit of both of you."

"It's lucky, sir, that you are an old man," I replied, "and that the affair happened ten years ago, or, by the Lord, Mr. Smithers, I would have given you such a horsewhipping as you never heard of!"

But this was the way in which Mrs. Hoggarty was brought back to her relatives; and this was the reason why we took that house in Bernard Street, the doings at which must now be described.

CHAPTER X.

OF SAM'S PRIVATE AFFAIRS, AND OF THE FIRM OF BROUGH AND HOFF.

We took a genteel house in Bernard Street, Russell Square, and my aunt sent for all her furniture from the country; which would have filled two such houses, but which came

pretty cheap to us young housekeepers, as we had only to pay the carriage of the goods from Bristol.

When I brought Mrs. H. her third half-year's dividend, having not for four months touched a shilling of her money, I must say she gave me £50 of the £80, and told me that was ample pay for the board and lodging of a poor old woman like her, who did not eat more than a sparrow.

I have myself, in the country, seen her eat nine sparrows in a pudding; but she was rich, and I could not complain. If she saved £600 a year, at the least, by living with us, why, all the savings would one day come to me; and so Mary and I consoled ourselves, and tried to manage matters as well as we might. It was no easy task to keep a mansion in Bernard Street and save money out of £470 a year, which was my income. But what a lucky fellow I was to have such an income!

As Mrs. Hoggarty left the Rookery in Smithers's carriage, Mr. Brough, with his four greys, was entering the lodge-gate; and I should like to have seen the looks of these two gentlemen, as the one was carrying the other's prey off, out of his own very den, under his very nose.

He came to see her the next day, and protested that he would not leave the house until she left it with him; that he had heard of his daughter's infamous conduct, and had seen her in tears—"in tears, madam, and on her knees, imploring Heaven to pardon her." But Mr. B. was obliged to leave the house without my aunt, who had a *causa major* for staying, and hardly allowed poor Mary out of her sight—opening every one of the letters that came into the house directed to my wife, and suspecting hers to everybody. Mary never told me of all this pain for many, many years afterwards, but had always a smiling face for her husband when he came home from his work. As for poor Gus, my aunt had so frightened him that he never once showed his nose in the place all the time we lived there, but used to be content with news of Mary, of whom he was as fond as he was of me.

Mr. Brough, when my aunt left him, was in a furious ill-humour with me. He found fault with me ten times a day, and openly, before the gents of the office; but I let him one day know pretty smartly that I was not only a

servant, but a considerable shareholder in the company; that I defied him to find fault with my work or my regularity; and that I was not minded to receive any insolent language from him or any man. He said it was always so; that he had never cherished a young man in his bosom, but the ingrate had turned on him; that he was accustomed to wrong and undutifulness from his children, and that he would pray that the sin might be forgiven me. A moment before he had been cursing and swearing at me, and speaking to me as if I had been his shoeblack. But, look you, I was not going to put up with any more of Madam Brough's airs, or of his. With *me* they might act as they thought fit, but I did not choose that my wife should be passed over by them, as she had been in the matter of the visit to Fulham.

Brough ended by warning me of Hodge and Smithers. "Beware of these men," said he; "but for my honesty, your aunt's landed property would have been sacrificed by these cormorants. And when, for her benefit—which you, obstinate young man, will not perceive—I wished to dispose of her land, her attorneys actually had the audacity—the unchristian avarice, I may say—to ask ten per cent. commission on the sale."

There might be some truth in this, I thought—at any rate, when rogues fall out, honest men come by their own; and now I began to suspect, I am sorry to say, that both the attorney and the director had a little of the rogue in their composition. It was especially about my wife's fortune that Mr. B. showed *his* cloven foot; for proposing, as usual, that I should purchase shares with it in our company, I told him that my wife was a minor, and as such, her little fortune was vested out of my control altogether. He flung away in a rage at this, and I soon saw that he did not care for me any more, by Abednego's manner to me. No more holidays, no more advances of money had I; on the contrary, the private clerkship at £50 was abolished, and I found myself on my £250 a year again. Well, what then? it was always a good income, and I did my duty, and laughed at the director.

About this time, in the beginning of 1824, the Jamaica Ginger Beer Company shut up shop—exploded, as Gus said, with a bang! The Patent Pump shares were down to £15

upon a paid-up capital of £65. Still, ours were at a high premium, and the Independent West Diddlesex held its head up as proudly as any office in London. Roundhand's abuse had had some influence against the director certainly, for he hinted at malversation of shares; but the company still stood as united as the Hand-in-Hand, and as firm as the Rock.

To return to the state of affairs in Bernard Street, Russell Square. My aunt's old furniture crammed our little rooms, and my aunt's enormous old jingling grand piano, with crooked legs and half the strings broken, occupied three-fourths of the little drawing-room. Here used Mrs. H. to sit and play us, for hours, sonatas that were in fashion in Lord Charleville's time, and sung with a cracked voice, till it was all that we could do to refrain from laughing.

And it was queer to remark the change that had taken place in Mrs. Hoggarty's character now: for whereas she was in the country among the topping persons of the village, and quite content with a tea-party at six and a game of twopenny whist afterwards—in London she would never dine till seven; would have a fly from the mews to drive in the Park twice a week; cut and uncut, and ripped up and twisted over and over, all her old gowns, flounces, caps, and fallals, and kept my poor Mary from morning till night altering them to the present mode. Mrs. Hoggarty, moreover, appeared in a new wig; and, I am sorry to say, turned out with such a pair of red cheeks as Nature never gave her, and as made all the people in Bernard Street stare, where they are not as yet used to such fashions.

Moreover, she insisted upon our establishing a servant in livery—a boy, that is, of about sixteen—who was dressed in one of the old liveries that she had brought with her from Somersetshire, decorated with new cuffs and collars, and new buttons; on the latter were represented the united crests of the Titmarshes and Hoggarties—namely, a tomtit rampant and a hog in armour. I thought this livery and crest-button rather absurd, I must confess, though my family *is* very ancient. And heavens! what a roar of laughter was raised in the office one day, when the little servant in the big livery, with the immense cane, walked in and brought me a message from Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty! Furthermore, all

letters were delivered on a silver tray. If we had had a baby, I believe aunt would have had it down on the tray; but there was, as yet, no foundation for Mr. Smithers's insinuation upon that score, any more than for his other cowardly fabrication before narrated. Aunt and Mary used to walk gravely up and down the New Road, with the boy following with his great gold-headed stick; but, though there was all this ceremony and parade, and aunt still talked of her acquaintances, we did not see a single person from week's end to week's end, and a more dismal house than ours could hardly be found in London town.

On Sundays, Mrs. Hoggarty used to go to Saint Pancras Church, then just built, and as handsome as Covent Garden Theatre; and of evenings, to a meeting-house of the Anabaptists; and *that* day, at least, Mary and I had to ourselves —for we chose to have seats at the Foundling, and heard the charming music there, and my wife used to look wistfully in the pretty children's faces—and so, for the matter of that, did I. It was not, however, till a year after our marriage that she spoke in a way which shall be here passed over, but which filled both her and me with inexpressible joy.

I remember she had the news to give me on the very day when the Muff and Tippet Company shut up, after swallowing a capital of £300,000, as some said, and nothing to show for it except a treaty with some Indians, who had afterwards tomahawked the agent of the company. Some people said there were no Indians, and no agent to be tomahawked at all, but that the whole had been invented in a house in Crutched Friars. Well, I pitied poor Tidd, whose £20,000 were thus gone in a year, and whom I met in the city that day with a most ghastly face. He had £1,000 of debts, he said, and talked of shooting himself; but he was only arrested, and passed a long time in the Fleet. Mary's delightful news, however, soon put Tidd and the Muff and Tippet Company out of my head, as you may fancy.

Other circumstances now occurred in the city of London which seemed to show that our director was—what is not to be found in Johnson's "Dictionary"—rather shaky. Three of his companies had broken; four more were in a notoriously insolvent state; and even at the meetings of the directors of

the West Diddlesex, some stormy words passed, which ended in the retirement of several of the Board. Friends of Mr. B.'s filled up their places—Mr. Puppet, Mr. Straw, Mr. Query, and other respectable gents coming forward and joining the concern. Brough and Hoff dissolved partnership, and Mr. B. said he had quite enough to do to manage the I. W. D., and intended gradually to retire from the other affairs. Indeed, such an association as ours was enough work for any man, let alone the parliamentary duties which Brough was called on to perform, and the seventy-two law-suits which burst upon him as principal director of the late companies.

Perhaps I should here describe the desperate attempts made by Mrs. Hoggarty to introduce herself into genteel life. Strange to say, although we had my Lord Tiptoff's word to the contrary, she insisted upon it that she and Lady Drum were intimately related; and no sooner did she read in the *Morning Post* of the arrival of her ladyship and her granddaughters in London, than she ordered the fly before-mentioned, and left cards at their respective houses: her card, that is—"MRS. HOGGARTY of CASTLE HOGGARTY," magnificently engraved in Gothic letters and flourishes—and ours—namely, "Mr. and Mrs. S. Titmarsh," which she had printed for the purpose.

She would have stormed Lady Jane Preston's door and forced her way upstairs, in spite of Mary's entreaties to the contrary, had the footman who received her card given her the least encouragement; but that functionary, no doubt struck by the oddity of her appearance, placed himself in the front of the door, and declared that he had positive orders not to admit any strangers to his lady. On which, Mrs. Hoggarty clenched her fist out of the coach-window, and promised that she would have him turned away.

Yellowplush only burst out laughing at this; and though aunt wrote a most indignant letter to Mr. Edmund Preston, complaining of the insolence of the servants of that right honourable gent, Mr. Preston did not take any notice of her letter further than to return it, with a desire that he might not be troubled with such impertinent visits for the future. A pretty day we had of it when this letter arrived, owing to my aunt's disappointment and rage in reading the

contents; for when Solomon brought up the note on the silver tea-tray as usual, my aunt seeing Mr. Preston's seal and name at the corner of the letter (which is the common way of writing adopted by those official gents)—my aunt, I say, seeing his name and seal, cried, "*Now*, Mary, who is right?" and betted my wife a sixpence that the envelope contained an invitation to dinner. She never paid the sixpence, though she lost, but contented herself by abusing Mary all day, and said I was a poor-spirited sneak for not instantly horsewhipping Mr. P. A pretty joke, indeed! They would have hanged me in those days, as they did the man who shot Mr. Perceval.

And now I should be glad to enlarge upon that experience in genteel life which I obtained through the perseverance of Mrs. Hoggarty; but it must be owned that my opportunities were but few, lasting only for the brief period of six months; and also, genteel society has been fully described already by various authors of novels, whose names need not here be set down, but who, being themselves connected with the aristocracy—namely, as members of noble families, or as footmen or hangers-on thereof—naturally understand their subject a great deal better than a poor young fellow from a fire office can.

There was our celebrated adventure in the Opera House, whither Mrs. H. would insist upon conducting us; and where, in a room of the establishment called the crush-room, where the ladies and gents, after the music and dancing, await the arrival of their carriages (a pretty figure did our little Solomon cut, by the way, with his big cane, among the gentlemen of the shoulder-knot assembled in the lobby!) —where, I say, in the crush-room, Mrs. H. rushed up to old Lady Drum, whom I pointed out to her, and insisted upon claiming relationship with her ladyship. But my Lady Drum had only a memory when she chose, as I may say, and had entirely, on this occasion, thought fit to forget her connection with the Titmarshes and Hoggarties. Far from recognizing us, indeed, she called Mrs. Hoggarty an "ojus 'oman," and screamed out as loud as possible for a police-officer.

This and other rebuffs made my aunt perceive the vanities of this wicked world, as she said, and threw her more and more into really serious society. She formed several very

valuable acquaintances, she said, at the Independent Chapel; and among others, lighted upon her friend of the Rookery, Mr. Grimes Wapshot. We did not know then the interview which he had had with Mr. Smithers, nor did Grimes think proper to acquaint us with the particulars of it; but though I did acquaint Mrs. H. with the fact that her favourite preacher had been tried for forgery, *she* replied that she considered the story an atrocious calumny, and *he* answered by saying that Mary and I were in lamentable darkness, and that we should infallibly find the way to a certain bottomless pit, of which he seemed to know a great deal. Under the reverend gentleman's guidance and advice, she, after a time, separated from Saint Pancras altogether—"*sat under him*," as the phrase is, regularly thrice a week—began to labour in the conversion of the poor of Bloomsbury and St. Giles's, and made a deal of baby-linen for distribution among those benighted people. She did not make any, however, for Mrs. Sam Titmarsh, who now showed signs that such would be speedily necessary, but let Mary (and my mother and sisters in Somersetshire) provide what was requisite for the coming event. I am not, indeed, sure that she did not say it was wrong on our parts to make any such provision, and that we ought to let the morrow provide for itself. At any rate, the Rev. Grimes Wapshot drank a deal of brandy-and-water at our house, and dined there even oftener than poor Gus used to do.

But I had little leisure to attend to him and his doings; for I must confess at this time I was growing very embarrassed in my circumstances, and was much harassed both as a private and public character.

As regards the former, Mrs. Hoggarty had given me £50; but out of that £50 I had to pay a journey post from Somersetshire, all the carriage of her goods from the country, the painting, papering, and carpeting of my house, the brandy and strong liquors drunk by the Rev. Grimes and his friends (for the reverend gent said that Rosolio did not agree with him); and finally, a thousand small bills and expenses incident to all housekeepers in the town of London.

Add to this, I received just at the time when I was most in want of cash, Madame Mantalini's bill, Messrs. Howell

and James's ditto, the account of Baron von Stiltz, and the bill of Mr. Polonius for the setting of the diamond-pin. All these bills arrived in a week, as they have a knack of doing; and fancy my astonishment, in presenting them to Mrs. Hoggarty, when she said, "Well, my dear, you are in the receipt of a very fine income. If you choose to order dresses and jewels from first-rate shops, you must pay for them; and don't expect that *I* am to abet your extravagance, or give you a shilling more than the munificent sum I pay you for board and lodging!"

How could I tell Mary of this behaviour of Mrs. Hoggarty, and Mary in such a delicate condition? And bad as matters were at home, I am sorry to say at the office they began to look still worse.

Not only did Roundhand leave, but Highmore went away. Abednego became head clerk; and one day old Abednego came to the place and was shown into the directors' private room. When he left it, he came trembling, chattering, and cursing downstairs; and had begun, "Shentlemen——" a speech to the very clerks in the office, when Mr. Brough, with an imploring look, and crying out, "Stop till Saturday!" at length got him into the street.

On Saturday, Abednego, junior, left the office for ever, and I became head clerk, with £400 a year salary. It was a fatal week for the office, too. On Monday, when I arrived and took my seat at the head desk, and my first read of the newspaper, as was my right, the first thing I read was, "Frightful fire in Houndsditch! Total destruction of Mr. Meshach's sealing-wax manufactory, and of Mr. Shadrach's clothing depot, adjoining. In the former was £20,000 worth of the finest Dutch wax, which the voracious element attacked and devoured in a twinkling. The latter estimable gentleman had just completed 40,000 suits of clothes for the cavalry of H.H. the Cacique of Poyais."

Both of these Jewish gents, who were connections of Mr. Abednego, were insured in our office to the full amount of their loss. The calamity was attributed to the drunkenness of a scoundrelly Irish watchman, who was employed on the premises, and who upset a bottle of whisky in the warehouse of Messrs. Shadrach, and incautiously looked for the liquor

with a lighted candle. The man was brought to our office by his employers, and certainly, as we all could testify, was *even then* in a state of frightful intoxication.

As if this were not sufficient, in the obituary was announced the demise of Alderman Pash—Alderman Cally-Pash we used to call him in our lighter hours, knowing his propensity to green fat; but such a moment as this was no time for joking! He was insured by our house for £5,000. And now I saw very well the truth of a remark of Gus's—namely, that life insurance companies go on excellently for a year or two after their establishment, but that it is much more difficult to make them profitable when the assured parties begin to die.

The Jewish fires were the heaviest blows we had had; for though the Waddingley Cotton Mills had been burnt in 1822, at a loss to the company of £80,000, and though the Patent Erostratus Match Manufactory had exploded in the same year at a charge of £14,000, there were those who said that the loss had not been near so heavy as was supposed—nay, that the company had burnt the above-named establishments as advertisements for themselves. Of these facts I can't be positive, having never seen the early accounts of the concern.

Contrary to the expectation of all us gents, who were ourselves as dismal as mutes, Mr. Brough came to the office in his coach-and-four, laughing and joking with a friend as he stepped out at the door.

"Gentlemen!" said he, "you have read the papers; they announce an event which I most deeply deplore. I mean the demise of the excellent Alderman Pash, one of our constituents. But if anything can console me for the loss of that worthy man, it is to think that his children and widow will receive, at eleven o'clock next Saturday, £5,000 from my friend Mr. Titmarsh, who is now head clerk here. As for the accident which has happened to Messrs. Shadrach and Meshach—in *that*, at least, there is nothing that can occasion any person sorrow. On Saturday next, or as soon as the particulars of their loss can be satisfactorily ascertained, my friend Mr. Titmarsh will pay to them across the counter a sum of forty, fifty, eighty, one hundred thousand pounds—according to the amount of their loss. *They*, at least, will

be remunerated; and though to our proprietors the outlay will no doubt be considerable, yet we can afford it, gentlemen. John Brough can afford it himself, for the matter of that, and not be very much embarrassed; and we must learn to bear ill-fortune as we have hitherto borne good, and show ourselves to be men always!"

Mr. B. concluded with some allusions, which I confess I don't like to give here; for to speak of heaven in connection with common worldly matters has always appeared to me irreverent, and to bring it to bear witness to the lie in his mouth, as a religious hypocrite does, is such a frightful crime, that one should be careful even in alluding to it.

Mr. Brough's speech somehow found its way into the newspapers of that very evening; nor can I think who gave a report of it, for none of our gents left the office that day until the evening papers had appeared. But there was the speech—ay, and at the week's end, although Roundhand was heard on 'Change that day declaring he would bet five to one that Alderman Pash's money would never be paid—at the week's end the money was paid by me to Mrs. Pash's solicitor across the counter, and no doubt Roundhand lost his money.

Shall I tell how the money was procured? There can be no harm in mentioning the matter now after twenty years' lapse of time; and moreover, it is greatly to the credit of two individuals now dead.

As I was head clerk, I had occasion to be frequently in Brough's room, and he now seemed once more disposed to take me into his confidence.

"Titmarsh, my boy," said he one day to me, after looking me hard in the face, "did you ever hear of the fate of the great Mr. Silberschmidt, of London?" Of course I had. Mr. Silberschmidt, the Rothschild of his day (indeed I have heard the latter famous gent was originally a clerk in Silberschmidt's house)—Silberschmidt, fancying he could not meet his engagements, committed suicide; and had he lived till four o'clock that day, would have known that he was worth £400,000. "To tell you frankly the truth," says Mr. B., "I am in Silberschmidt's case. My late partner, Hoff, has given bills in the name of the firm to an enormous amount,

and I have been obliged to meet them. I have been cast in fourteen actions, brought by creditors of that infernal Ginger Beer Company; and all the debts are put upon my shoulders, on account of my known wealth. Now, unless I have time, I cannot pay; and the long and short of the matter is, that if I cannot procure £5,000 before Saturday, *our concern is ruined!*"

"What! the West Diddlesex ruined?" says I, thinking of my poor mother's annuity. "Impossible! our business is splendid!"

"We must have £5,000 on Saturday, and we are saved; and if you will, as you can, get it for me, I will give you £10,000 for the money!"

B. then showed me to a fraction the accounts of the concern, and his own private account, proving beyond the possibility of a doubt that with the £5,000 our office must be set a-going, and without it that the concern must stop. No matter how he proved the thing; but there is, you know, a *dictum* of a statesman that, give him but leave to use figures, and he will prove anything.

I promised to ask Mrs. Hoggarty once more for the money, and she seemed not to be disinclined. I told him so; and that day he called upon her, his wife called upon her, his daughter called upon her, and once more the Brough carriage-and-four was seen at our house.

But Mrs. Brough was a bad manager, and instead of carrying matters with a high hand, fairly burst into tears before Mrs. Hoggarty, and went down on her knees and besought her to save dear John. This at once aroused my aunt's suspicions; and instead of lending the money, she wrote off to Mr. Smithers instantly to come up to her, desired me to give her up the £3,000 scrip shares that I possessed, called me an atrocious cheat and heartless swindler, and vowed I had been the cause of her ruin.

How was Mr. Brough to get the money? I will tell you. Being in his room one day, old Gates, the Fulham porter, came and brought him from Mr. Balls, the pawnbroker, a sum of £1,200. Missus told him, he said, to carry the plate to Mr. Balls; and having paid the money, old Gates fumbled a great deal in his pockets, and at last pulled out

a £5 note, which he said his daughter Jane had just sent him from service, and begged Mr. B. would let him have another share in the company. "He was mortal sure it would go right yet. And when he heard master crying and cursing as he and missus were walking in the shrubbery, and saying that for the want of a few pounds—a few shillings—the finest fortune in Europe was to be overthrown, why Gates and his woman thought that they should come for'ard, to be sure, with all they could, to help the kindest master and missus ever was."

This was the substance of Gates's speech; and Mr. Brough shook his hand and—took the £5. "Gates," said he, "that £5 note shall be the best outlay you ever made in your life!" And I have no doubt it was; but it was in heaven that poor old Gates was to get the interest of his little mite.

Nor was this the only instance. Mrs. Brough's sister, Miss Dough, who had been on bad terms with the director almost ever since he had risen to be a great man, came to the office with a power of attorney, and said, "John, Isabella has been with me this morning, and says you want money, and I have brought you my £4,000; it is all I have, John, and pray God it may do you good—you and my dear sister, who was the best sister in the world to me till—till a little time ago."

And she laid down the paper. I was called up to witness it, and Brough, with tears in his eyes, told me her words; for he could trust me, he said. And thus it was that I came to be present at Gates's interview with his master, which took place only an hour afterwards. Brave Mrs. Brough! how she was working for her husband! Good woman, and kind! but *you* had a true heart, and merited a better fate! Though wherefore say so? The woman, to this day, thinks her husband an angel, and loves him a thousand times better for his misfortunes.

On Saturday, Alderman Pash's solicitor was paid by me across the counter, as I said. "Never mind your aunt's money, Titmarsh, my boy," said Brough; "never mind her having resumed her shares. You are a true, honest fellow; you have never abused me like that pack of curs downstairs, and I'll make your fortune yet!"

* * * * *

The next week, as I was sitting with my wife, with Mr. Smithers, and with Mrs. Hoggarty, taking our tea comfortably, a knock was heard at the door, and a gentleman desired to speak to me in the parlour. It was Mr. Aminadab of Chancery Lane, who arrested me as a shareholder of the Independent West Diddlesex Association, at the suit of Von Stiltz of Clifford Street, Tailor and Draper.

I called down Smithers, and told him for heaven's sake not to tell Mary.

"Where is Brough?" says Mr. Smithers.

"Why," says Mr. Aminadab, "he's once more of the firm of Brough and Off, sir: he breakfasted at Calais this morning!"

CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH IT APPEARS THAT A MAN MAY POSSESS A DIAMOND, AND YET BE VERY HARD PRESSED FOR A DINNER.

On that fatal Saturday evening, in a hackney-coach, fetched from the Foundling, was I taken from my comfortable house and my dear little wife, whom Mr. Smithers was left to console as he might. He said that I was compelled to take a journey upon business connected with the office; and my poor Mary made up a little portmanteau of clothes, and tied a comforter round my neck, and bade my companion particularly to keep the coach-windows shut, which injunction the grinning wretch promised to obey. Our journey was not long; it was only a shilling fare to Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane, and there I was set down.

The house before which the coach stopped seemed to be only one of half a dozen in that street which were used for the same purpose. No man, be he ever so rich, can pass by those dismal houses, I think, without a shudder. The front windows are barred, and on the dingy pillar of the door was a shining brass-plate, setting forth that "Aminadab, Officer to the Sheriff of Middlesex," lived therein. A little red-haired Israelite opened the first door as our coach drove up, and received me and my baggage.

As soon as we entered the door he barred it, and I found myself in the face of another huge door, which was strongly locked; and, at last, passing through that, we entered the lobby of the house.

There is no need to describe it. It is very like ten thousand other houses in our dark city of London. There was a dirty passage and a dirty stair, and from the passage two dirty doors let into two filthy rooms, which had strong bars at the windows, and yet withal an air of horrible finery that makes me uncomfortable to think of even yet. On the walls hung all sorts of trumpery pictures in tawdry frames (how different from those capital performances of my cousin Michael Angelo!); on the mantelpiece huge French clocks, vases, and candlesticks; on the sideboards, enormous trays of Birmingham plated-ware: for Mr. Aminadab not only arrested those who could not pay money, but lent it to those who could, and had already, in the way of trade, sold and bought these articles many times over.

I agreed to take the back-parlour for the night; and while a Hebrew damsel was arranging a little dusky sofa-bedstead (woe betide him who has to sleep on it!) I was invited into the front parlour, where Mr. Aminadab, bidding me take heart, told me I should have a dinner for nothing with a party who had just arrived. I did not want for dinner, but I was glad not to be alone—not alone, even till Gus came, for whom I dispatched a messenger to his lodgings hard by.

I found there, in the front parlour, at eight o'clock in the evening, four gentlemen, just about to sit down to dinner. Surprising! there was Mr. B., a gentleman of fashion, who had only within half an hour arrived in a post-chaise, with his companion Mr. Lock, an officer of Horsham jail. Mr. B. was arrested in this wise:—He was a careless, good-humoured gentleman, and had indorsed bills to a large amount for a friend, who, a man of high family and unquestionable honour, had pledged the latter, along with a number of the most solemn oaths, for the payment of the bills in question. Having indorsed the notes, young Mr. B., with a proper thoughtlessness, forgot all about them, and so, by some chance, did the friend whom he obliged; for, instead of being in London with the money for the payment of his

obligations, this latter gentleman was travelling abroad, and never hinted one word to Mr. B. that the notes would fall upon him. The young gentleman was at Brighton lying sick of a fever; was taken from his bed by a bailiff, and carried, on a rainy day, to Horsham jail; had a relapse of his complaint, and when sufficiently recovered, was brought up to London to the house of Mr. Aminadab, where I found him —a pale, thin, good-humoured, *lost* young man. He was lying on a sofa, and had given orders for the dinner to which I was invited. The lad's face gave one pain to look at; it was impossible not to see that his hours were numbered.

Now Mr. B. has not anything to do with my humble story, but I can't help mentioning him, as I saw him. He sent for his lawyer and his doctor: the former settled speedily his accounts with the bailiff, and the latter arranged all his earthly accounts; for after he went from the sponging-house he never recovered from the shock of the arrest, and in a few weeks he *died.* And though this circumstance took place many years ago, I can't forget it to my dying day; and often see the author of Mr. B.'s death—a prosperous gentleman, riding a fine horse in the Park, lounging at the window of a club, with many friends, no doubt, and a good reputation. I wonder whether the man sleeps easily and eats with a good appetite? I wonder whether he has paid Mr. B.'s heirs the sum which that gentleman paid, and *died for?*

If Mr. B.'s history has nothing to do with mine, and is only inserted here for the sake of a moral, what business have I to mention particulars of the dinner to which I was treated by that gentleman, in the sponging-house in Cursitor Street? Why, for the moral too; and therefore the public must be told of what really and truly that dinner consisted.

There were five guests, and three silver tureens of soup—namely, mock-turtle soup, ox-tail soup, and giblet-soup. Next came a great piece of salmon, likewise on a silver dish, a roast goose, a roast saddle of mutton, roast game, and all sorts of adjuncts. In this way can a gentleman live in a sponging-house, if he be inclined; and over this repast (which, in truth, I could not touch, for, let alone having dined, my heart was full of care)—over this meal my friend

Gus Hoskins found me, when he received the letter that I had dispatched to him.

Gus, who had never been in a prison before, and whose heart failed him as the red-headed young Moses opened and shut for him the numerous iron outer doors, was struck dumb to see me behind a bottle of claret, in a room blazing with gilt lamps. The curtains were down too, and you could not see the bars at the windows; and Mr. B., Mr. Lock, the Brighton officer, Mr. Aminadab, and another rich gentleman of his trade and religious persuasion, were chirping as merrily, and looked as respectably, as any nobleman in the land.

"Have him in," said Mr. B., "if he's a friend of Mr. Titmarsh's; for, cuss me, I like to see a rogue, and run me through, Titmarsh, but I think you are one of the best in London. You beat Brough—you do, by Jove! for he looks like a rogue—anybody would swear to him; but you! by Jove, you look the very picture of honesty!"

"A deep file," said Aminadab, winking and pointing me out to his friend Mr. Jehoshaphat.

"A good one," says Jehoshaphat.

"In for three hundred thousand pound," says Aminadab: "Brough's right-hand man, and only three-and-twenty."

"Mr. Titmarsh, sir, your 'ealth, sir," says Mr. Lock, in an ecstasy of admiration. "Your very good 'ealth, sir; and better luck to you next time."

"Pooh, pooh! *he's* all right," says Aminadab; "let *him* alone."

"In for *what?*" shouted I, quite amazed. "Why, sir, you arrested me for £90."

"Yes, but you are in for half a million—you know you are. *Them* debts I don't count—them paltry tradesmen's accounts. I mean Brough's business. It's an ugly one, but you'll get through it. We all know you; and I lay my life that when you come through the court, Mrs. Titmarsh has got a handsome thing laid by."

"Mrs. Titmarsh has a small property, sir," says I. "What then?"

The three gentlemen burst into a loud laugh, said I was a "rum chap," a "downy cove," and made other remarks which I could not understand then, but the meaning of

which I have since comprehended; for they took me to be a great rascal, I am sorry to say, and supposed that I had robbed the I. W. D. Association, and, in order to make my money secure, settled it on my wife.

It was in the midst of this conversation that, as I said, Gus came in; and whew! when he saw what was going on, he gave *such* a whistle.

"Herr von Joel, by Jove!" says Aminadab. At which all laughed.

"Sit down," says Mr. B., "sit down, and wet your whistle, my piper! I say, egad! you're the piper that played before Moses! Had you there, Dab. Dab, get a fresh bottle of Burgundy for Mr. Hoskins." And before he knew where he was, there was Gus for the first time in his life drinking Clot-Vougeot. Gus said he had never tasted Bergamy before, at which the bailiff sneered, and told him the name of the wine.

"*Old Clo!* What?" says Gus, and we laughed; but the Hebrew gents did not this time.

"Come, come, sir!" says Mr. Aminadab's friend, "ve're all shentlemen here, and shentlemen never makish reflexunsh upon other shentlemen'sh pershuashunsh."

After this feast was concluded, Gus and I retired to my room to consult about my affairs. With regard to the responsibility incurred as a shareholder in the West Diddlesex I was not uneasy; for though the matter might cause me a little trouble at first, I knew I was not a shareholder—that the shares were scrip shares, making the dividend payable to the bearer—and my aunt had called back her shares, and consequently I was free. But it was very unpleasant to me to consider that I was in debt nearly a hundred pounds to tradesmen, chiefly of Mrs. Hoggarty's recommendation; and as she had promised to be answerable for their bills, I determined to send her a letter reminding her of her promise, and begging her at the same time to relieve me from Mr. Von Stiltz's debt, for which I was arrested, and which was incurred, not certainly at her desire, but at Mr. Brough's, and would never have been incurred by me but at the absolute demand of that gentleman.

I wrote to her, therefore, begging her to pay all these debts, and promised myself on Monday morning again to be with

my dear wife. Gus carried off the letter, and promised to deliver it in Bernard Street after church time, taking care that Mary should know nothing at all of the painful situation in which I was placed. It was near midnight when we parted, and I tried to sleep as well as I could in the dirty little sofa-bedstead of Mr. Aminadab's back-parlour.

That morning was fine and sunshiny, and I heard all the bells ringing cheerfully for church, and longed to be walking to the Foundling with my wife. But there were the three iron doors between me and liberty, and I had nothing for it but to read my prayers in my own room, and walk up and down afterwards in the court at the back of the house. Would you believe it? This very court was like a cage! Great iron bars covered it in from one end to another, and here it was that Mr. Aminadab's jail-birds took the air.

They had seen me reading out of the prayer-book at the back-parlour window, and all burst into a yell of laughter when I came to walk in the cage. One of them shouted out "Amen!" when I appeared; another called me a muff (which means, in the slang language, a very silly fellow); a third wondered that I took to my prayer-book *yet*.

"What do you mean, sir?" says I to the fellow—a rough man, a horse-dealer.

"Why, when you are going *to be hanged*, you young hypocrite!" says the man. "But that is always the way with Brough's people," continued he. "I had four greys once for him—a great bargain—but he would not go to look at them at Tattersall's, nor speak a word of business about them, because it was a Sunday."

"Because there are hypocrites, sir," says I, "religion is not to be considered a bad thing; and if Mr. Brough would not deal with you on a Sunday, he certainly did his duty."

The men only laughed the more at this rebuke, and evidently considered me a great criminal. I was glad to be released from their society by the appearance of Gus and Mr. Smithers. Both wore very long faces. They were ushered into my room, and, without any orders of mine, a bottle of wine and biscuits were brought in by Mr. Aminadab, which I really thought was very kind of him.

"Drink a glass of wine, Mr. Titmarsh," says Smithers,

"and read this letter. A pretty note was that which you sent to your aunt this morning, and here you have an answer to it."

I drank the wine, and trembled rather as I read as follows:—

"SIR,—

"IF, because you knew I had desined to leave you my proparty, you wished to murdar me, and so stepp into it, you are dissapointed. Your *villiany* and *ingratatude would* have murdard me, had I not, by Heaven's grace, been inabled to look for consalation *elsewhere*.

"For nearly a year I have been a *martar* to you. I gave up everything—my happy home in the country, where all respected the name of Hoggarty; my valuble furnitur and wines; my plate, glass, and crockry; I brought all—all to make your home happy and rispectable. I put up with the *airs and impertanencies* of Mrs. Titmarsh; I loaded her and you with presents and bennafits. I sacrafised myself; I gave up the best sociaty in the land, to witch I have been accustomed, in order to be a gardian and compannion to you, and prevent, if possable, that *waist and ixtravygance* which I *prophycied* would be your ruin. Such waist and ixtravygance never, never, never did I see. Buttar waisted as if it had been dirt, coles flung away, candles burnt *at both ends*, tea and meat the same. The butcher's bill in this house was enough to support six famalies.

"And now you have the audassaty, being placed in prison justly for your crimes—for cheating me of £3,000; for robbing your mother of an insignificient summ, which to her, poor thing, was everything (though she will not feel her loss as I do, being all her life next door to a beggar); for incurring detts which you cannot pay, wherein you knew that your miserable income was quite unable to support your ixtravygance—you come upon me to pay your detts! No, sir, it is quite enough that your mother should go on the parish, and that your wife should sweep the streets, to which you have indeed brought them; *I*, at least, though cheated by you of a large summ, and obliged to pass my days in comparitive ruin, can retire, and have some of the comforts to which my rank entitles me. The furnitur in this house

is mine; and as I presume you intend *your lady* to sleep in the streets, I give you warning that I shall remove it all to-morrow.

"Mr. Smithers will tell you that I had intended to leave you my intire fortune. I have this morning, in his presents, solamly toar up my will; and hereby renounce all connection with you and your beggarly family.

"SUSAN HOGGARTY.

"P.S.—I took a viper into my bosom, *and it stung me.*"

I confess that, on the first reading of this letter, I was in such a fury that I forgot almost the painful situation in which it plunged me, and the ruin hanging over me.

"What a fool you were, Titmarsh, to write that letter!" said Mr. Smithers. "You have cut your own throat, sir—lost a fine property—written yourself out of five hundred a year. Mrs. Hoggarty, my client, brought the will, as she says, downstairs, and flung it into the fire before our faces."

"It's a blessing that your wife was from home," added Gus. "She went to church this morning with Dr. Salts's family, and sent word that she would spend the day with them. She was always glad to be away from Mrs. H., you know."

"She never knew on which side her bread was buttered," said Mr. Smithers. "You should have taken the lady when she was in the humour, sir, and have borrowed the money elsewhere. Why, sir, I had almost reconciled her to her loss in that cursed company. I showed her how I had saved out of Brough's claws the whole of her remaining fortune, which he would have devoured in a day, the scoundrel! And if you would have left the matter to me, Mr. Titmarsh, I would have had you reconciled completely to Mrs. Hoggarty; I would have removed all your difficulties; I would have lent you the pitiful sum of money myself."

"Will you?" says Gus; "that's a trump!" and he seized Smithers's hand, and squeezed it so that the tears came into the attorney's eyes.

"Generous fellow!" said I; "lend me money, when you know what a situation I am in, and not able to pay!"

"Ay, my good sir, there's the rub!" says Mr. Smithers.

"I said I *would* have lent the money; and so to the acknowledged heir of Mrs. Hoggarty I would—would at this moment; for nothing delights the heart of Bob Smithers more than to do a kindness. I would have rejoiced in doing it, and a mere acknowledgment from that respected lady would have amply sufficed. But now, sir, the case is altered: you have no security to offer, as you justly observe."

"Not a whit, certainly."

"And without security, sir, of course can expect no money—of course not. You are a man of the world, Mr. Titmarsh, and I see our notions exactly agree."

"There's his wife's property," says Gus.

"Wife's property? Bah! Mrs. Sam Titmarsh is a minor, and can't touch a shilling of it. No, no; no meddling with minors for me! But stop!—your mother has a house and shop in our village. Get me a mortgage of that——"

"I'll do no such thing, sir," says I. "My mother has suffered quite enough on my score already, and has my sisters to provide for; and I will thank you, Mr. Smithers, not to breathe a syllable to her regarding my present situation."

"You speak like a man of honour, sir," says Mr. Smithers, "and I will obey your injunctions to the letter. I will do more, sir. I will introduce you to a respectable firm here, my worthy friends, Messrs. Higgs, Biggs, and Blatherwick, who will do everything in their power to serve you. And so, sir, I wish you a very good morning."

And with this Mr. Smithers took his hat and left the room: and after a further consultation with my aunt, as I heard afterwards, quitted London that evening by the mail.

I sent my faithful Gus off once more to break the matter gently to my wife, fearing lest Mrs. Hoggarty should speak of it abruptly to her, as I knew in her anger she would do. But he came in an hour panting back, to say that Mrs. H. had packed and locked her trunks, and had gone off in a hackney-coach. So knowing that my poor Mary was not to return till night, Hoskins remained with me till then; and, after a dismal day, left me once more at nine to carry the dismal tidings to her.

At ten o'clock on that night there was a great rattling and ringing at the outer door, and presently my poor girl fell into

my arms; and Gus Hoskins sat blubbering in a corner, as I tried my best to console her.

* * * * *

The next morning I was favoured with a visit from Mr. Blatherwick, who, hearing from me that I had only three guineas in my pocket, told me very plainly that lawyers only lived by fees. He recommended me to quit Cursitor Street, as living there was very expensive. And as I was sitting very sad, my wife made her appearance (it was with great difficulty that she could be brought to leave me the night previous).

"The horrible men came at four this morning," said she, "four hours before light."

"What horrible men?" says I.

"Your aunt's men," said she, "to remove the furniture; they had it all packed before I came away. And I let them carry all," said she; "I was too sad to look what was ours and what was not. That odious Mr. Wapshot was with them, and I left him seeing the last wagon-load from the door. I have only brought away your clothes," added she, "and a few of mine; and some of the books you used to like to read; and some—some things I have been getting for the —for the baby. The servants' wages were paid up to Christmas, and I paid them the rest. And see! just as I was going away, the post came, and brought to me my half-year's income —£35, dear Sam. Isn't it a blessing?"

"Will you pay my bill, Mr. What-d'ye-call'im?" here cried Mr. Aminadab, flinging open the door (he had been consulting with Mr. Blatherwick, I suppose). "I want the room for *a gentleman*. I guess it's too dear for the like of you." And here—will you believe it?—the man handed me a bill of three guineas for two days' board and lodging in his odious house.

* * * * *

There was a crowd of idlers round the door as I passed out of it, and had I been alone I should have been ashamed of seeing them; but, as it was, I was only thinking of my dear, dear wife, who was leaning trustfully on my arm, and smiling like heaven into my face—ay, and *took* heaven, too, into the Fleet prison with me—or an angel out of heaven.

Ah! I had loved her before; and happy it is to love when one is hopeful and young, in the midst of smiles and sunshine; but be *un*happy, and then see what it is to be loved by a good woman! I declare before heaven that of all the joys and happy moments it has given me, that was the crowning one—that little ride, with my wife's cheek on my shoulder, down Holborn to the prison! Do you think I cared for the bailiff that sat opposite? No, by the Lord! I kissed her, and hugged her—yes, and cried with her likewise. But before our ride was over her eyes dried up, and she stepped blushing and happy out of the coach at the prison-door, as if she were a princess going to the Queen's drawing-room.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH THE HERO'S AUNT'S DIAMOND MAKES ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE HERO'S UNCLE.

THE failure of the great Diddlesex Association speedily became the theme of all the newspapers, and every person concerned in it was soon held up to public abhorrence as a rascal and a swindler. It was said that Brough had gone off with a million of money. Even it was hinted that poor I had sent a hundred thousand pounds to America, and only waited to pass through the court in order to be a rich man for the rest of my days. This opinion had some supporters in the prison, where, strange to say, it procured me consideration, of which, as may be supposed, I was little inclined to avail myself. Mr. Aminadab, however, in his frequent visits to the Fleet, persisted in saying that I was a poor-spirited creature, a mere tool in Brough's hands, and had not saved a shilling. Opinions, however, differed; and I believe it was considered by the turnkeys that I was a fellow of exquisite dissimulation, who had put on the appearance of poverty in order more effectually to mislead the public.

Messrs. Abednego and Son were similarly held up to public odium; and, in fact, what were the exact dealings of these gentlemen with Mr. Brough I have never been able to learn. It was proved by the books that large sums of money had

been paid to Mr. Abednego by the company; but he produced documents signed by Mr. Brough which made the latter and the West Diddlesex Association his debtors to a still further amount. On the day I went to the Bankruptcy Court to be examined, Mr. Abednego and the two gentlemen from Houndsditch were present to swear to their debts, and made a sad noise, and uttered a vast number of oaths in attestation of their claim. But Messrs. Jackson and Paxton produced against them that very Irish porter who was said to have been the cause of the fire, and, I am told, hinted that they had matter for hanging the Jewish gents if they persisted in their demand. On this they disappeared altogether, and no more was ever heard of their losses. I am inclined to believe that our director had had money from Abednego; had given him shares as bonus and security; had been suddenly obliged to redeem these shares with ready money, and so had precipitated the ruin of himself and the concern. It is needless to say here in what a multiplicity of companies Brough was engaged. That in which poor Mr. Tidd invested his money did not pay twopence in the pound, and that was the largest dividend paid by any of them.

As for ours—ah! there was a pretty scene as I was brought from the Fleet to the Bankruptcy Court, to give my testimony as late head clerk and accountant of the West Diddlesex Association.

My poor wife, then very near her time, insisted upon accompanying me to Basinghall Street; and so did my friend Gus Hoskins, that true and honest fellow. If you had seen the crowd that was assembled, and the hubbub that was made as I was brought up.

"Mr. Titmarsh," says the Commissioner as I came to the table, with a peculiar sarcastic accent on the Tit—"Mr. Titmarsh, you were the confidant of Mr. Brough, the principal clerk of Mr. Brough, and a considerable shareholder in the company?"

"Only a nominal one, sir," said I.

"Of course, only nominal," continued the Commissioner, turning to his colleague with a sneer; "and a great comfort it must be to you, sir, to think that you had a share in all the plun—the profits of the speculation, and now can free your-

self from the losses by saying you are only a nominal shareholder."

"The infernal villain!" shouted out a voice from the crowd. It was that of the furious half-pay captain and late shareholder, Captain Sparr.

"Silence in the court there!" the Commissioner continued; and all this while Mary was anxiously looking in his face, and then in mine, as pale as death; while Gus, on the contrary, was as red as vermilion. "Mr. Titmarsh, I have had the good fortune to see a list of your debts from the Insolvent Court, and find that you are indebted to Mr. Stiltz, the great tailor, in a handsome sum; to Mr. Polonius, the celebrated jeweller, likewise; to fashionable milliners and dressmakers, moreover;—and all this upon a salary of £200 per annum. For so young a gentleman, it must be confessed you have employed your time well."

"Has this anything to do with the question, sir?" says I. "Am I here to give an account of my private debts, or to speak as to what I know regarding the affairs of the company? As for my share in it, I have a mother, sir, and many sisters——"

"The d—d scoundrel!" shouts the captain.

"Silence that there fellow!" shouts Gus, as bold as brass; at which the court burst out laughing, and this gave me courage to proceed.

"My mother, sir, four years since, having a legacy of £400 left to her, advised with her solicitor, Mr. Smithers, how she should dispose of this sum; and as the Independent West Diddlesex was just then established, the money was placed in an annuity in that office, where I procured a clerkship. You may suppose me a very hardened criminal, because I have ordered clothes of Mr. Von Stiltz; but you will hardly fancy that I, a lad of nineteen, knew anything of the concerns of the company into whose service I entered as twentieth clerk, my own mother's money paying, as it were, for my place. Well, sir, the interest offered by the company was so tempting that a rich relative of mine was induced to purchase a number of shares."

"*Who* induced your relative, if I may make so bold as to inquire?"

"I can't help owning, sir," says I, blushing, "that I wrote a letter myself. But consider, my relative was sixty years old, and I was twenty-one. My relative took several months to consider, and had the advice of her lawyers before she acceded to my request. And I made it at the instigation of Mr. Brough, who dictated the letter which I wrote, and who I really thought then was as rich as Mr. Rothschild himself."

"Your friend placed her money in your name; and you, if I mistake not, Mr. Titmarsh, were suddenly placed over the heads of twelve of your fellow-clerks as a reward for your service in obtaining it?"

"It is very true, sir"—and, as I confessed it, poor Mary began to wipe her eyes, and Gus's ears (I could not see his face) looked like two red-hot muffins—"it's quite true, sir; and, as matters have turned out, I am heartily sorry for what I did. But at the time I thought I could serve my aunt as well as myself; and you must remember then how high our shares were."

"Well, sir, having procured this sum of money, you were straightway taken into Mr. Brough's confidence. You were received into his house, and from third clerk speedily became head clerk, in which post you were found at the disappearance of your worthy patron!"

"Sir, you have no right to question me, to be sure; but here are a hundred of our shareholders, and I'm not unwilling to make a clean breast of it," said I, pressing Mary's hand. "I certainly *was* the head clerk. And why? Because the other gents left the office. I certainly was received into Mr. Brough's house. And why? Because, sir, *my aunt had more money to lay out.* I see it all clearly now, though I could not understand it then; and the proof that Mr. Brough wanted my aunt's money, and not me, is that, when she came to town, our director carried her by force out of my house to Fulham, and never so much as thought of asking me or my wife thither. Ay, sir, and he would have had her remaining money, had not her lawyer from the country prevented her disposing of it. Before the concern finally broke, and as soon as she heard there was doubt concerning it, she took back her shares—scrip shares they were, sir, as you know—and has disposed of them as she thought fit. Here, sir, and

gents," says I, "you have the whole of the history as far as regards me. In order to get her only son a means of livelihood, my mother placed her little money with the company: it is lost. My aunt invested larger sums with it, which were to have been mine one day, and they are lost too; and here am I, at the end of four years, a disgraced and ruined man. Is there any one present, however much he has suffered by the failure of the company, that has had worse fortune through it than I?"

"Mr. Titmarsh," says Mr. Commissioner, in a much more friendly way, and at the same time casting a glance at a newspaper reporter that was sitting hard by, "your story is not likely to get into the newspapers; for, as you say, it is a private affair, which you had no need to speak of unless you thought proper, and may be considered as a confidential conversation between us and the other gentlemen here. But if it *could* be made public, it might do some good, and warn people, if they *will* be warned, against the folly of such enterprises as that in which you have been engaged. It is quite clear from your story that you have been deceived as grossly as any one of the persons present. But look you, sir, if you had not been so eager after gain, I think you would not have allowed yourself to be deceived, and would have kept your relative's money, and inherited it, according to your story, one day or other. Directly people expect to make a large interest, their judgment seems to desert them; and because they wish for profit, they think they are sure of it, and disregard all warnings and all prudence. Besides the hundreds of honest families who have been ruined by merely placing confidence in this Association of yours, and who deserve the heartiest pity, there are hundreds more who have embarked in it, like yourself, not for investment, but for speculation; and these, upon my word, deserve the fate they have met with. As long as dividends are paid, no questions are asked; and Mr. Brough might have taken the money for his shareholders on the highroad, and they would have pocketed it, and not been too curious. But what's the use of talking?" says Mr. Commissioner, in a passion: "here is one rogue detected, and a thousand dupes made; and if another swindler starts to-morrow, there will be a thousand

more of his victims round this table a year hence; and so, I suppose, to the end. And now let's go to business, gentlemen, and excuse this sermon."

After giving an account of all I knew, which was very little, other gents who were employed in the concern were examined; and I went back to prison, with my poor little wife on my arm. We had to pass through the crowd in the rooms, and my heart bled as I saw, amongst a score of others, poor Gates, Brough's porter, who had advanced every shilling to his master, and was now, with ten children, houseless and penniless in his old age. Captain Sparr was in this neighbourhood, but by no means so friendly disposed; for while Gates touched his hat, as if I had been a lord, the little captain came forward threatening with his bamboo-cane, and swearing with great oaths that I was an accomplice of Brough. "Curse you for a smooth-faced scoundrel!" says he. "What business have you to ruin an English gentleman, as you have me?" And again he advanced with his stick. But this time, officer as he was, Gus took him by the collar, and shoved him back, and said, "Look at the lady, you brute, and hold your tongue!" And when he looked at my wife's situation, Captain Sparr became redder for shame than he had before been for anger. "I'm sorry she's married to such a good-for-nothing," muttered he, and fell back; and my poor wife and I walked out of the court, and back to our dismal room in the prison.

It was a hard place for a gentle creature like her to be confined in, and I longed to have some of my relatives with her when her time should come. But her grandmother could not leave the old lieutenant; and my mother had written to say that, as Mrs. Hoggarty was with us, she was quite as well at home with her children. "What a blessing it is for you, under your misfortunes," continued the good soul, "to have the generous purse of your aunt for succour!" Generous purse of my aunt, indeed! Where could Mrs. Hoggarty be? It was evident that she had not written to any of her friends in the country, nor gone thither, as she threatened.

But as my mother had already lost so much money through my unfortunate luck, and as she had enough to do with her little pittance to keep my sisters at home, and as, on hearing

of my condition, she would infallibly have sold her last gown to bring me aid, Mary and I agreed that we would not let her know what our real condition was—bad enough! Heaven knows, and sad and cheerless. Old Lieutenant Smith had likewise nothing but his half-pay and his rheumatism; so we were, in fact, quite friendless.

That period of my life, and that horrible prison, seem to me like recollections of some fever. What an awful place!—not for the sadness, strangely enough, as I thought, but for the gaiety of it; for the long prison galleries were, I remember, full of life and a sort of grave bustle. All day and all night doors were clapping to and fro; and you heard loud voices, oaths, footsteps, and laughter. Next door to our room was one where a man sold gin, under the name of *tape;* and here, from morning till night, the people kept up a horrible revelry, and sang—sad songs some of them. But my dear little girl was, thank God! unable to understand the most part of their ribaldry. She never used to go out till nightfall; and all day she sat working at a little store of caps and dresses for the expected stranger—and not, she says to this day, unhappy. But the confinement sickened her, who had been used to happy country air, and she grew daily paler and paler.

The Fives Court was opposite our window; and here I used, very unwillingly at first, but afterwards, I do confess, with much eagerness, to take a couple of hours' daily sport. Ah, it was a strange place! There was an aristocracy there as elsewhere—amongst other gents, a son of my Lord Deuce-ace; and many of the men in the prison were as eager to walk with him, and talked of his family as knowingly, as if they were Bond Street bucks. Poor Tidd, especially, was one of these. Of all his fortune he had nothing left but a dressing-case and a flowered dressing-gown; and to these possessions he added a fine pair of moustaches, with which the poor creature strutted about, and though cursing his ill-fortune, was, I do believe, as happy whenever his friends brought him a guinea as he had been during his brief career as a gentleman on town. I have seen sauntering dandies in watering-places ogling the women, watching eagerly for steam-boats and stage-coaches as if their lives depended upon them,

and strutting all day in jackets up and down the public walks. Well, there are such fellows in prisons; quite as dandified and foolish, only a little more shabby—dandies with dirty beards and holes at their elbows.

I did not go near what is called the poor side of the prison—I *dared* not, that was the fact. But our little stock of money was running low; and my heart sickened to think what might be my dear wife's fate, and on what sort of a couch our child might be born. But Heaven spared me that pang—Heaven, and my dear, good friend Gus Hoskins.

The attorneys to whom Mr. Smithers recommended me told me that I could get leave to live in the rules of the Fleet, could I procure sureties to the marshal of the prison for the amount of the detainer lodged against me; but though I looked Mr. Blatherwick hard in the face, he never offered to give the bail for me, and I knew no housekeeper in London who would procure it. There was, however, one whom I did not know—and that was old Mr. Hoskins, the leather-seller of Skinner Street, a kind, fat gentleman, who brought his fat wife to see Mrs. Titmarsh; and though the lady gave herself rather patronizing airs (her husband being free of the Skinners Company, and bidding fair to be Alderman, nay, Lord Mayor of the first city in the world), she seemed heartily to sympathize with us; and her husband stirred and bustled about until the requisite leave was obtained, and I was allowed comparative liberty.

As for lodgings, they were soon had. My old landlady, Mrs. Stokes, sent her Jemima to say that her first floor was at our service; and when we had taken possession of it, and I offered at the end of the week to pay her bill, the good soul, with tears in her eyes, told me that she did not want for money now, and that she knew I had enough to do with what I had. I did not refuse her kindness; for indeed I had but five guineas left, and ought not by rights to have thought of such expensive apartments as hers. But my wife's time was very near, and I could not bear to think that she should want for any comfort in her lying-in.

That admirable woman, with whom the Misses Hoskins came every day to keep company—and very nice, kind ladies they are—recovered her health a good deal, now she

was out of the odious prison and was enabled to take exercise. How gaily did we pace up and down Bridge Street and Chatham Place, to be sure! And yet in truth I was a beggar, and felt sometimes ashamed of being so happy.

With regard to the liabilities of the Company, my mind was now made quite easy; for the creditors could only come upon our directors, and these it was rather difficult to find. Mr. Brough was across the water; and I must say, to the credit of that gentleman, that while everybody thought he had run away with hundreds of thousands of pounds, he was in a garret at Boulogne, with scarce a shilling in his pocket, and his fortune to make afresh. Mrs. Brough, like a good, brave woman, remained faithful to him, and only left Fulham with the gown on her back; and Miss Belinda, though grumbling, and sadly out of temper, was no better off. For the other directors—when they came to inquire at Edinburgh for Mr. Mull, W.S., it appeared there *was* a gentleman of that name, who had practised in Edinburgh, with good reputation until 1800, since when he had retired to the Isle of Skye; and on being applied to, knew no more of the West Diddlesex Association than Queen Anne did. General Sir Dionysius O'Halloran had abruptly quitted Dublin, and returned to the republic of Guatemala. Mr. Shirk went into the *Gazette*. Mr. Macraw, M.P., and King's Counsel, had not a single guinea in the world but what he received for attending our Board; and the only man seizable was Mr. Manstraw, a wealthy navy contractor, as we understood, at Chatham. He turned out to be a small dealer in marine stores, and his whole stock in trade was not worth £10. Mr. Abednego was the other director, and we have already seen what became of *him*.

"Why, as there is no danger from the West Diddlesex," suggested Mr. Hoskins, senior, "should you not now endeavour to make an arrangement with your creditors; and who can make a better bargain with them than pretty Mrs. Titmarsh here, whose sweet eyes would soften the hardest-hearted tailor or milliner that ever lived?"

Accordingly my dear girl, one bright day in February,

shook me by the hand, and bidding me be of good cheer, set off with Gus in a coach to pay a visit to those persons. Little did I think, a year before, that the daughter of the gallant Smith should ever be compelled to be a suppliant to tailors and haberdashers; but *she*, Heaven bless her! felt none of the shame which oppressed me—or *said* she felt none—and went away, nothing doubting, on her errand.

In the evening she came back, and my heart thumped to know the news. I saw it was bad by her face. For some time she did not speak, but looked as pale as death, and wept as she kissed me. "*You* speak, Mr. Augustus," at last said she, sobbing; and so Gus told me the circumstances of that dismal day.

"What do you think, Sam?" says he. "That infernal aunt of yours, at whose command you had the things, has written to the tradesmen to say that you are a swindler and impostor; that you give out that *she* ordered the goods; that she is ready to drop down dead, and to take her Bible-oath she never did any such thing, and that they must look to you alone for payment. Not one of them would hear of letting you out; and as for Mantalini, the scoundrel was so insolent that I gave him a box on the ear, and would have half killed him, only poor Mary—Mrs. Titmarsh I mean—screamed and fainted, and I brought her away, and here she is as ill as can be."

That night the indefatigable Gus was obliged to run post-haste for Doctor Salts, and next morning a little boy was born. I did not know whether to be sad or happy, as they showed me the little weakly thing; but Mary was the happiest woman, she declared, in the world, and forgot all her sorrows in nursing the poor baby. She went bravely through her time, and vowed that it was the loveliest child in the world; and that though Lady Tiptoff, whose confinement we read of as having taken place the same day, might have a silk bed and a fine house in Grosvenor Square, she never, never could have such a beautiful child as our dear little Gus—for after whom should we have named the boy, if not after our good, kind friend? We had a little party at the christening, and I assure you were very merry over our tea.

The mother, thank Heaven! was very well, and it did one's heart good to see her in that attitude in which I think every woman, be she ever so plain, looks beautiful—with her baby at her bosom. The child was sickly, but she did not see it. We were very poor, but what cared she? She had no leisure to be sorrowful as I was. I had my last guinea now in my pocket; and when *that* was gone—ah! my heart sickened to think of what was to come, and I prayed for strength and guidance, and in the midst of my perplexities felt yet thankful that the danger of the confinement was over; and that for the worse fortune which was to befall us, my dear wife was at least prepared, and strong in health.

I told Mrs. Stokes that she must let us have a cheaper room—a garret that should cost but a few shillings; and though the good woman bade me remain in the apartments we occupied, yet, now that my wife was well, I felt it would be a crime to deprive my kind landlady of her chief means of livelihood; and at length she promised to get me a garret as I wanted, and to make it as comfortable as might be, and little Jemima declared that she would be glad beyond measure to wait on the mother and the child.

The room, then, was made ready, and though I took some pains not to speak of the arrangement too suddenly to Mary, yet there was no need of disguise or hesitation; for when at last I told her—"Is that all?" said she, and took my hand with one of her blessed smiles, and vowed that she and Jemima would keep the room as pretty and neat as possible. "And I will cook your dinners," added she; "for you know you said I make the best roly-poly puddings in the world." God bless her! I do think some women almost love poverty. But I did not tell Mary how poor I was, nor had she any idea how lawyers', and prison, and doctor's fees had diminished the sum of money which she brought me when we came to the Fleet.

It was not, however, destined that she and her child should inhabit that little garret. We were to leave our lodgings on Monday morning; but on Saturday evening the child was seized with convulsions, and all Sunday the mother watched and prayed for it. But it pleased God to take the

nocent infant from us, and on Sunday at midnight it lay corpse in its mother's bosom. Amen! We have other hildren happy and well now round about us, and from the ther's heart the memory of this little thing has almost ded; but I do believe that every day of her life the mother inks of her firstborn that was with her for so short a while. Many and many a time has she taken her daughters to the rave in St. Bride's, where he lies buried; and she wears till at her neck a little, little lock of gold hair, which she ook from the head of the infant as he lay smiling in his offin. It has happened to me to forget the child's birthday, ut to her never; and often, in the midst of common talk, omes something that shows she is thinking of the child till—some simple allusion that is to me inexpressibly ffecting.

I shall not try to describe her grief, for such things are acred and secret; and a man has no business to place them n paper for all the world to read. Nor should I have nentioned the child's loss at all, but that even that loss vas the means of a great worldly blessing to us, as my wife as often with tears and thanks acknowledged.

While my wife was weeping over her child, I am ashamed o say I was distracted with other feelings besides those of rief for its loss; and I have often since thought what a naster—nay, destroyer—of the affections want is, and have earned from experience to be thankful for *daily bread.* That acknowledgment of weakness which we make in imploring to be relieved from hunger and from temptation, s surely wisely put in our daily prayer. Think of it, you who are rich, and take heed how you turn a beggar away.

The child lay there in its wicker cradle, with its sweet ixed smile in its face (I think the angels in heaven must ave been glad to welcome that pretty innocent smile); nd it was only the next day, after my wife had gone to lie own, and I sat keeping watch by it, that I remembered he condition of its parents, and thought, I can't tell with vhat a pang, that I had not money left to bury the little hing, and wept bitter tears of despair. Now, at last, I thought must apply to my poor mother, for this was a sacred neces- ity; and I took paper, and wrote her a letter at the baby's

side, and told her of our condition. But, thank Heaven! I never sent the letter; for as I went to the desk to get sealing-wax and seal that dismal letter, my eyes fell upon the diamond-pin that I had quite forgotten, and that was lying in the drawer of the desk.

I looked into the bedroom: my poor wife was asleep—she had been watching for three nights and days, and had fallen asleep from sheer fatigue—and I ran out to a pawnbroker's with the diamond, and received seven guineas for it; and coming back put the money into the landlady's hand, and told her to get what was needful. My wife was still asleep when I came back, and when she woke, we persuaded her to go downstairs to the landlady's parlour; and meanwhile the necessary preparations were made, and the poor child consigned to its coffin.

The next day, after all was over, Mrs. Stokes gave me back three out of the seven guineas; and then I could not help sobbing out to her my doubts and wretchedness, telling her that this was the last money I had, and when that was gone, I knew not what was to become of the best wife that ever a man was blest with.

My wife was downstairs with the woman. Poor Gus, who was with me, and quite as much affected as any of the party, took me by the arm, and led me downstairs; and we quite forgot all about the prison and the rules, and walked a long, long way across Blackfriars Bridge, the kind fellow striving as much as possible to console me.

When we came back, it was in the evening. The first person who met me in the house was my kind mother, who fell into my arms with many tears, and who rebuked me tenderly for not having told her of my necessities. She never should have known of them, she said; but she had not heard from me since I wrote announcing the birth of the child, and she felt uneasy about my silence, and meeting Mr. Smithers in the street, asked from him news concerning me: whereupon that gentleman, with some little show of alarm, told her that he thought her daughter-in-law was confined in an uncomfortable place; that Mrs. Hoggarty had left us; finally that I was in prison. This news at once dispatched my poor mother on her travels, and she had

only just come from the prison, where she learned my address.

I asked her whether she had seen my wife, and how she found her. Rather to my amaze she said that Mary was out with the landlady when she arrived; and eight—nine o'clock came, and she was absent still.

At ten o'clock returned—not my wife, but Mrs. Stokes, and with her a gentleman, who shook hands with me on coming into the room, and said, "Mr. Titmarsh, I don't know whether you will remember me; my name is Tiptoff. I have brought you a note from Mrs. Titmarsh, and a message from my wife, who sincerely commiserates your loss, and begs you will not be uneasy at Mrs. Titmarsh's absence. She has been good enough to promise to pass the night with Lady Tiptoff; and I am sure you will not object to her being away from you, while she is giving happiness to a sick mother and a sick child." After a few more words, my lord left us. My wife's note only said that Mrs. Stokes would tell me all.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN WHICH IT IS SHOWN THAT A GOOD WIFE IS THE BEST DIAMOND A MAN CAN WEAR IN HIS BOSOM.

"MRS. TITMARSH, ma'am," says Mrs. Stokes, "before I gratify your curiosity, ma'am, permit me to observe that angels is scarce, and it's rare to have one, much more two, in a family. Both your son and your daughter-in-law, ma'am, are of that uncommon sort; they are, now, reely, ma'am."

My mother said she thanked God for both of us; and Mrs. Stokes proceeded:—

"When the fu—when the seminary, ma'am, was concluded this morning, your poor daughter-in-law was glad to take shelter in my humble parlour, ma'am, where she wept, and told a thousand stories of the little cherub that's gone. Heaven bless us! it was here but a month, and no one could have thought it could have done such a many things in that time. But a mother's eyes are clear, ma'am; and I had just such another angel, my dear little Antony, that was

born before Jemima, and would have been twenty-three now were he in this wicked world, ma'am. However, I won't speak of him, ma'am, but of what took place.

"You must know, ma'am, that Mrs. Titmarsh remained downstairs while Mr. Samuel was talking with his friend Mr. Hoskins; and the poor thing would not touch a bit of dinner, though we had it made comfortable; and after dinner, it was with difficulty I could get her to sup a little drop of wine-and-water, and dip a toast in it. It was the first morsel that had passed her lips for many a long hour, ma'am.

"Well, she would not speak, and I thought it best not to interrupt her, but she sat and looked at my two youngest that were playing on the rug; and just as Mr. Titmarsh and his friend Gus went out, the boy brought the newspaper, ma'am—it always comes from three to four, and I began a-reading of it. But I couldn't read much for thinking of poor Mr. Sam's sad face as he went out, and the sad story he told me about his money being so low; and every now and then I stopped reading, and bade Mrs. T. not to take on so, and told her some stories about my dear little Antony.

"'Ah!' says she, sobbing, and looking at the young ones, 'you have other children, Mrs. Stokes; but that—that was my only one;' and she flung back in her chair, and cried fit to break her heart; and I knew that the cry would do her good, and so went back to my paper—the *Morning Post*, ma'am. I always read it, for I like to know what's a-going on in the West End.

"The very first thing that my eyes lighted upon was this:—'Wanted, immediately, a respectable person as wet-nurse. Apply at No.— Grosvenor Square.' 'Bless us and save us!' says I, 'here's poor Lady Tiptoff ill;' for I knew her ladyship's address, and how she was confined on the very same day with Mrs. T.; and, for the matter of that, her ladyship knows *my* address, having visited here.

"A sudden thought came over me. 'My dear Mrs. Titmarsh,' said I, 'you know how poor and how good your husband is.'

"'Yes,' says she, rather surprised.

"'Well, my dear,' says I, looking her hard in the face, 'Lady Tiptoff, who knows him, wants a nurse for her son,

Lord Poynings. Will you be a brave woman, and look for the place, and mayhap replace the little one that God has taken from you?'

"She began to tremble and blush; and then I told her what you, Mr. Sam, had told me the other day about your money matters; and no sooner did she hear it than she sprung to her bonnet, and said, 'Come, come,' and in five minutes she had me by the arm, and we walked together to Grosvenor Square. The air did her no harm, Mr. Sam, and during the whole of the walk she never cried but once, and then it was at seeing a nursery-maid in the Square.

"A great fellow in livery opens the door, and says, 'You're the forty-fifth as come about this 'ere place; but, fust, let me ask you a preliminary question. Are you a Hirishwoman?'

"'No, sir,' says Mrs. T.

"'That's suffishnt, mem,' says the gentleman in plush; 'I see you're not by your axnt. Step this way, ladies, if you please. You'll find some more candidix for the place upstairs; but I sent away forty-four happlicants because they *was* Hirish.'

"We were taken upstairs over very soft carpets, and brought into a room, and told by an old lady who was there to speak very softly, for my lady was only two rooms off. And when I asked how the baby and her ladyship were, the old lady told me both were pretty well; only the doctor said Lady Tiptoff was too delicate to nurse any longer, and so it was considered necessary to have a wet-nurse.

"There was another young woman in the room—a tall, fine woman as ever you saw—that looked very angry and contempshious at Mrs. T. and me, and said, 'I've brought a letter from the duchess whose daughter I nust; and I think, Mrs. Blenkinsop, mem, my Lady Tiptoff may look far before she finds such another nuss as me. Five feet six high, had the small-pox, married to a corporal in the Life Guards, perfectly healthy, best of charactiers, only drink water; and as for the child, ma'am, if her ladyship had six, I've a plenty for them all.'

"As the woman was making this speech, a little gentleman in black came in from the next room, treading as if on velvet. The woman got up, and made him a low curtsy,

and folding her arms on her great broad chest, repeated the speech she had made before. Mrs. T. did not get up from her chair, but only made a sort of a bow; which, to be sure, I thought was ill manners, as this gentleman was evidently the apothecary. He looked hard at her, and said, 'Well, my good woman, and are you come about the place too?'

"'Yes, sir,' says she, blushing.

"'You seem very delicate. How old is your child? How many have you had? What character have you?'

"Your wife didn't answer a word; so I stepped up, and said, 'Sir,' says I, 'this lady has just lost her first child, and isn't used to look for places, being the daughter of a captain in the navy; so you'll excuse her want of manners in not getting up when you came in.'

"The doctor at this sat down and began talking very kindly to her. He said he was afraid that her application would be unsuccessful, as Mrs. Horner came very strongly recommended from the Duchess of Doncaster, whose relative Lady Tiptoff was; and presently my lady appeared, looking very pretty, ma'am, in an elegant lace-cap and a sweet muslin *robe-de-sham*.

"A nurse came out of her ladyship's room with her; and while my lady was talking to us, walked up and down in the next room with something in her arms.

"First, my lady spoke to Mrs. Horner, and then to Mrs. T.; but all the while she was talking, Mrs. Titmarsh, rather rudely, as I thought, ma'am, was looking into the next room—looking, looking at the baby there with all her might. My lady asked her her name, and if she had any character; and as she did not speak, I spoke up for her, and said she was the wife of one of the best men in the world—that her ladyship knew the gentleman, too, and had brought him a haunch of venison. Then Lady Tiptoff looked up quite astonished, and I told the whole story: how you had been head clerk, and that rascal, Brough, had brought you to ruin. 'Poor thing!' said my lady. Mrs. Titmarsh did not speak, but still kept looking at the baby; and the great big grenadier of a Mrs. Horner looked angrily at her.

"'Poor thing!' says my lady, taking Mrs. T.'s hand very kind, 'she seems very young. How old are you, my dear?'

"'Five weeks and two days!' says your wife, sobbing.

"Mrs. Horner burst into a laugh; but there was a tear in my lady's eyes, for she knew what the poor thing was a-thinking of.

"'Silence, woman!' says she angrily to the great grenadier-woman; and at this moment the child in the next room began crying.

"As soon as your wife heard the noise, she sprung from her chair and made a step forward, and put both her hands to her breast and said, 'The child—the child—give it me!' and then began to cry again.

"My lady looked at her for a moment, and then ran into the next room and brought her the baby; and the baby clung to her as if he knew her, and a pretty sight it was to see that dear woman with the child at her bosom.

"When my lady saw it, what do you think she did? After looking on it for a bit, she put her arms round your wife's neck and kissed her.

"'My dear,' said she, 'I am sure you are as good as you are pretty, and you shall keep the child; and I thank God for sending you to me!'

"These were her very words; and Dr. Bland, who was standing by, says, 'It's a second judgment of Solomon!'

"'I suppose, my lady, you don't want *me?*' says the big woman, with another curtsy.

"'Not in the least!' answers my lady haughtily, and the grenadier left the room. And then I told all your story at full length, and Mrs. Blenkinsop kept me to tea, and I saw the beautiful room that Mrs. Titmarsh is to have next to Lady Tiptoff's; and when my Lord came home, what does he do but insist upon coming back with me here in a hackney-coach, as he said he must apologize to you for keeping your wife away."

I could not help, in my own mind, connecting this strange event, which, in the midst of our sorrow, came to console us, and in our poverty to give us bread—I could not help connecting it with the *diamond-pin*, and fancying that the disappearance of that ornament had somehow brought a different and a better sort of luck into my family. And though some gents who read this may call me a poor-spirited fellow

for allowing my wife to go out to service, who was bred a lady and ought to have servants herself, yet, for my part, I confess I did not feel one minute's scruple or mortification on the subject. If you love a person, is it not a pleasure to feel obliged to him? And this, in consequence, I felt. I was proud and happy at being able to think that my dear wife should be able to labour and earn bread for me, now misfortune had put it out of my power to support me and her. And now, instead of making any reflections of my own upon prison discipline, I will recommend the reader to consult that admirable chapter in the life of Mr. Pickwick, in which the same theme is handled, and which shows how silly it is to deprive honest men of the means of labour just at the moment when they most want it. What could I do? There were one or two gents in the prison who could work (literary gents—one wrote his "Travels in Mesopotamia," and the other his "Sketches at Almack's," in the place); but all the occupation I could find was walking down Bridge Street, and then up Bridge Street, and staring at Alderman Waithman's windows, and then at the black man who swept the crossing. I never gave him anything; but I envied him his trade and his broom, and the money that continually fell into his old hat. But I was not allowed even to carry a broom.

Twice or thrice—for Lady Tiptoff did not wish her little boy often to breathe the air of such a close place as Salisbury Square—my dear Mary came in the thundering carriage to see me. They were merry meetings; and—if the truth must be told—twice, when nobody was by, I jumped into the carriage and had a drive with her; and when I had seen her home, jumped into another hackney-coach and drove back. But this was only twice: for the system was dangerous, and it might bring me into trouble, and it cost three shillings from Grosvenor Square to Ludgate Hill.

Here, meanwhile, my good mother kept me company; and what should we read of one day but the marriage of Mrs. Hoggarty and the Rev. Grimes Wapshot! My mother, who never loved Mrs. H., now said that she should repent all her life having allowed me to spend so much of my time with that odious, ungrateful woman; and added that she and I

too were justly punished for worshipping the mammon of unrighteousness, and forgetting our natural feelings for the sake of my aunt's paltry lucre. "Well, Amen!" said I. "This is the end of all our fine schemes! My aunt's money and my aunt's diamond were the causes of my ruin; and now they are clear gone, thank Heaven! and I hope the old lady will be happy, and I must say I don't envy the Rev. Grimes Wapshot." So we put Mrs. Hoggarty out of our thoughts, and made ourselves as comfortable as might be.

Rich and great people are slower in making Christians of their children than we poor ones, and little Lord Poynings was not christened until the month of June. A duke was one godfather, and Mr. Edmund Preston, the State Secretary, another; and that kind Lady Jane Preston, whom I have before spoken of, was the godmother to her nephew. She had not long been made acquainted with my wife's history; and both she and her sister loved her heartily, and were very kind to her. Indeed, there was not a single soul in the house, high or low, but was fond of that good sweet creature; and the very footmen were as ready to serve her as they were their own mistress.

"I tell you what, sir," says one of them. "You see, Tit, my boy, I'm a connyshure, and up to snuff; and if ever I see a lady in my life, Mrs. Titmarsh is one. I can't be fimiliar with her—I've tried——"

"Have you, sir?" said I.

"Don't look so indignant! I can't, I say, be fimiliar with her as I am with you. There's a somethink in her, a jenny-squaw, that haws me, sir! And even my lord's own man, that 'as 'ad as much success as any gentleman in Europe—he says that, cuss him——"

"Mr. Charles," says I, "tell my lord's own man that, if he wants to keep his place and his whole skin, he will never address a single word to that lady but such as a servant should utter in the presence of his mistress; and take notice that I am a gentleman, though a poor one, and will murder the first man who does her wrong!"

Mr. Charles only said "Gammin!" to this. But psha! in bragging about my own spirit, I forgot to say what great good fortune my dear wife's conduct procured for me.

On the christening-day, Mr. Preston offered her first a five and then a twenty pound note; but she declined either. But she did not decline a present that the two ladies made her together, and this was no other than *my release from the Fleet.* Lord Tiptoff's lawyer paid every one of the bills against me, and that happy christening-day made me a free man. Ah! who shall tell the pleasure of that day, or the merry dinner we had in Mary's room at Lord Tiptoff's house, when my lord and my lady came upstairs to shake hands with me?

"I have been speaking to Mr. Preston," says my lord, "the gentleman with whom you had the memorable quarrel, and he has forgiven it, although he was in the wrong, and promises to do something for you. We are going down, meanwhile, to his house at Richmond; and be sure, Mr. Titmarsh, I will not fail to keep you in his mind."

"*Mrs.* Titmarsh will do that," says my lady; "for Edmund is woefully smitten with her!" And Mary blushed and I laughed, and we were all very happy; and sure enough there came from Richmond a letter to me, stating that I was appointed fourth clerk in the Tape and Sealing-wax Office, with a salary of £80 per annum.

Here perhaps my story ought to stop; for I was happy at last, and have never since, thank Heaven! known want. But Gus insists that I should add how I gave up the place in the Tape and Sealing-wax Office, and for what reason. That excellent Lady Jane Preston is long gone, and so is Mr. P—— off in an apoplexy, and there is no harm now in telling the story.

The fact was, that Mr. Preston had fallen in love with Mary in a much more serious way than any of us imagined; for I do believe he invited his brother-in-law to Richmond for no other purpose than to pay court to his son's nurse. And one day, as I was coming post-haste to thank him for the place he had procured for me, being directed by Mr. Charles to the "scrubbery," as he called it, which led down to the river—there, sure enough, I found Mr. Preston, on his knees too, on the gravel-walk, and before him Mary, holding the little lord.

"Dearest creature!" says Mr. Preston, "do but listen to

me, and I'll make your husband consul at Timbuctoo! He shall *never* know of it, I tell you; he *can* never know of it. I pledge you my word as a Cabinet Minister! Oh, don't look at me in that arch way! By heavens, your eyes kill me!"

Mary, when she saw me, burst out laughing, and ran down the lawn; my lord, making a huge crowing, too, and holding out his little fat hands. Mr. Preston, who was a heavy man, was slowly getting up, when, catching a sight of me looking as fierce as the crater of Mount Etna, he gave a start back and lost his footing, and rolled over and over, walloping into the water at the garden's edge. It was not deep, and he came bubbling and snorting out again in as much fright as fury.

"You d——d ungrateful villain!" says he, "what do you stand there laughing for?"

"I'm waiting your orders for Timbuctoo, sir," says I, and laughed fit to die; and so did my Lord Tiptoff and his party, who joined us on the lawn; and Jeames the footman came forward and helped Mr. Preston out of the water.

"Oh, you old sinner!" says my lord, as his brother-in-law came up the slope. "Will that heart of yours be always so susceptible, you romantic, apoplectic, immoral man?"

Mr. Preston went away, looking blue with rage, and ill-treated his wife for a whole month afterwards.

"At any rate," says my lord, "Titmarsh here has got a place through our friend's unhappy attachment; and Mrs. Titmarsh has only laughed at him, so there is no harm there. It's an ill wind that blows nobody good, you know."

"Such a wind as that, my lord, with due respect to you, shall never do good to me. I have learned in the past few years what it is to make friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, and that out of such friendship no good comes in the end to honest men. It shall never be said that Sam Titmarsh got a place because a great man was in love with his wife; and were the situation ten times as valuable, I should blush every day I entered the office-doors in thinking of the base means by which my fortune was made. You have made me free, my lord; and thank God! I am willing to work. I can easily get a clerkship with the

assistance of my friends; and with that and my wife's income, we can manage honestly to face the world."

This rather long speech I made with some animation; for, look you, I was not over well pleased that his lordship should think me capable of speculating in any way on my wife's beauty.

My lord at first turned red and looked rather angry; but at last he held out his hand and said, "You are right, Titmarsh, and I am wrong; and let me tell you, in confidence, that I think you are a very honest fellow. You shan't lose by your honesty, I promise you."

Nor did I: for I am at this present moment Lord Tiptoff's steward and right-hand man; and am I not a happy father? and is not my wife loved and respected by all the country? and is not Gus Hoskins, my brother-in-law, partner with his excellent father in the leather way, and the delight of all his nephews and nieces for his tricks and fun?

As for Mr. Brough, that gentleman's history would fill a volume of itself. Since he vanished from the London world, he has become celebrated on the Continent, where he has acted a thousand parts, and met all sorts of changes of high and low fortune. One thing we may at least admire in the man, and that is, his undaunted courage; and I can't help thinking, as I have said before, that there must be some good in him, seeing the way in which his family are faithful to him. With respect to Roundhand, I had best also speak tenderly. The case of Roundhand *v.* Tidd is still in the memory of the public; nor can I ever understand how Bill Tidd, so poetic as he was, could ever take on with such a fat, odious, vulgar woman as Mrs. R., who was old enough to be his mother.

As soon as we were in prosperity, Mr. and Mrs. Grimes Wapshot made overtures to be reconciled to us; and Mr. Wapshot laid bare to me all the baseness of Mr. Smithers's conduct in the Brough transaction. Smithers had also endeavoured to pay his court to me, once when I went down to Somersetshire; but I cut his pretensions short, as I have shown. "He it was," said Mr. Wapshot, "who induced Mrs. Grimes (Mrs. Hoggarty she was then) to purchase the West Diddlesex shares, receiving, of course, a large bonus for himself. But directly he found that Mrs. Hoggarty had

fallen into the hands of Mr. Brough, and that he should lose the income he made from the lawsuits with her tenants and from the management of her landed property, he determined to rescue her from that villain Brough, and came to town for the purpose. He also," added Mr. Wapshot, "vented his malignant slander against me; but Heaven was pleased to frustrate his base schemes. In the proceedings consequent on Brough's bankruptcy, Mr. Smithers could not appear, for his own share in the transactions of the company would have been most certainly shown up. During his absence from London, I became the husband—the happy husband—of your aunt. But though, my dear sir, I have been the means of bringing her to grace, I cannot disguise from you that Mrs. W. has faults which all my pastoral care has not enabled me to eradicate. She is close of her money, sir—very close; nor can I make that charitable use of her property which, as a clergyman, I ought to do, for she has tied up every shilling of it, and only allows me half a crown a week for pocket-money. In temper, too, she is very violent. During the first years of our union I strove with her—yea, I chastised her; but her perseverance, I must confess, got the better of me. I make no more remonstrances, but am as a lamb in her hands, and she leads me whithersoever she pleases."

Mr. Wapshot concluded his tale by borrowing half a crown from me (it was at the Somerset Coffee-house in the Strand, where he came, in the year 1832, to wait upon me), and I saw him go from thence into the gin-shop opposite, and come out of the gin-shop half an hour afterwards, reeling across the street, and perfectly intoxicated.

He died next year, when his widow, who called herself Mrs. Hoggarty-Grimes-Wapshot, of Castle Hoggarty, said that over the grave of her saint all earthly resentments were forgotten, and proposed to come and live with us, paying us, of course, a handsome remuneration. But this offer my wife and I respectfully declined; and once more she altered her will, which once more she had made in our favour, called us ungrateful wretches and pampered menials, and left all her property to the Irish Hoggarties. But seeing my wife one day in a carriage with Lady Tiptoff, and hearing that we had been at the great ball at Tiptoff Castle, and that I had

grown to be a rich man, she changed her mind again, sent for me on her death-bed, and left me the farms of Slopperton and Squashtail, with all her savings for fifteen years. Peace be to her soul! for certainly she left me a very pretty property.

Though I am no literary man myself, my cousin Michael (who generally, when he is short of coin, comes down and passes a few months with us) says that my Memoirs may be of some use to the public (meaning, I suspect, to himself); and if so, I am glad to serve him and them, and hereby take farewell, bidding all gents who peruse this to be cautious of their money, if they have it; to be still more cautious of their friends' money; to remember that great profits imply great risks; and that the great shrewd capitalists of this country would not be content with four per cent. for their money, if they could securely get more. Above all, I entreat them never to embark in any speculation of which the conduct is not perfectly clear to them, and of which the agents are not perfectly open and loyal.

END OF "THE HISTORY OF SAMUEL TITMARSH."

MEMOIRS OF MR. C. J. YELLOWPLUSH

THE MEMOIRS OF

MR. C. J. YELLOWPLUSH,

SOMETIME FOOTMAN IN MANY GENTEEL FAMILIES.

MISS SHUM'S HUSBAND.

CHAPTER I.

I WAS born in the year one, of the present or Christian hera, and am, in consquints, seven-and-thirty years old. My manma called me Charles James Harrington Fitzroy Yellowplush, in compliment to several noble families, and to a sellybrated coachmin whom she knew, who wore a yellow livry, and drove the Lord Mayor of London.

Why she gev me this genlmn's name is a diffiklty, or rayther the name of a part of his dress; however, it's stuck to me through life, in which I was, as it were, a footman by buth.

Praps he was my father—though on this subjict I can't speak suttinly, for my ma wrapped up my buth in a mistry. I may be illygitmit, I may have have been changed at nuss; but I've always had genlmnly tastes through life, and have no doubt that I come of a genlmnly origum.

The less I say about my parint the better, for the dear old creatur was very good to me, and, I fear, had very little other goodness in her. Why, I can't say; but I always passed as her nevyou. We led a strange life: sometimes ma was dressed in sattn and rooge, and sometimes in rags and dutt; some-

times I got kisses, and sometimes kix; sometimes gin, and sometimes shampang. Law bless us! how she used to swear at me, and cuddle me; there we were, quarrelling and making up, sober and tipsy, starving and guttling by turns, just as ma got money or spent it. But let me draw a vail over the seen, and speak of her no more—its 'sfishant for the public to know, that her name was Miss Montmorency, and we lived in the New Cut.

My poor mother died one morning, Hev'n bless her! and I was left alone in this wide wicked wuld, without so much money as would buy me a penny roal for my brexfast. But there was some amongst our naybours (and let me tell you there's more kindness among them poor disrepettable creaturs than in half a dozen lords or barrynets) who took pity upon poor Sal's orfin (for they bust out laffin when I called her Miss Montmorency), and gev me bred and shelter. I'm afraid, in spite of their kindness, that my *morrils* wouldn't have improved if I'd stayed long among 'em. But a benny-violent genlmn saw me, and put me to school. The academy which I went to was called the Free School of Saint Bartholomew's the Less—the young genlmn wore green baize coats, yellow leather whatsisnames, a tin plate on the left harm, and a cap about the size of a muffing. I stayed there sicks years; from sicks, that is to say, till my twelth year, during three years of witch I distinguished myself not a little in the musicle way, for I bloo the bellus of the church horgin, and very fine tunes we played too.

Well, it's not worth recounting my jewvenile follies (what trix we used to play the applewoman! and how we put snuff in the old clark's Prayer-book—my eye!); but one day, a genlmn entered the schoolroom—it was on the very day when I went to subtraxion—and asked the master for a young lad for a servant. They pitched upon me glad enough; and nex day found me sleeping in the sculry, close under the sink, at Mr. Bago's country-house at Pentonwille.

Bago kep a shop in Smithfield market, and drov a taring good trade in the hoil and Italian way. I've heard him say, that he cleared no less than fifty pounds every year by letting his front room at hanging time. His winders looked right opsit Newgit, and many and many dozen chaps has he

seen hanging there. Laws was laws in the year ten, and they screwed chaps' nex for nex to nothink. But my bisniss was at his country-house, where I made my first *outray* into fashnabl life. I was knife, errint, and stable boy then, and an't ashamed to own it; for my merrits have raised me to what I am—two livries, forty pound a year, malt-licker, washin, silk-stocking, and wax candles—not countin wails, which is somethink pretty considerable at *our* house, I can tell you.

I didn't stay long here, for a suckmstance happened which got me a very different situation. A handsome young genlmn, who kep a tilbry and a ridin hoss at livry, wanted a tiger. I bid at once for the place; and being a neat, tidy-looking lad, he took me. Bago gave me a character, and he my first livry; proud enough I was of it, as you may fancy.

My new master had some business in the city, for he went in every morning at ten, got out of his tilbry at the Citty Road, and had it waiting for him at six; when, if it was summer, he spanked round into the Park, and drove one of the neatest turnouts there. Wery proud I was in a gold-laced hat, a drab coat, and a red weskit, to sit by his side when he drove. I already began to ogle the gals in the carridges, and to feel that longing for fashionabl life which I've had ever since. When he was at the oppera, or the play, down I went to skittles, or to White Condick Gardens; and Mr. Frederic Altamont's young man was somebody, I warrant: to be sure there is a very few man-servants at Pentonwille, the poppylation being mostly gals of all work; and so, though only fourteen, I was as much a man down there, as if I had been as old as Jerusalem.

But the most singular thing was, that my master, who was such a gay chap, should live in such a hole. He had only a ground-floor in John Street—a parlor and a bedroom. I slep over the way, and only came in with his boots and brex-fast of a morning.

The house he lodged in belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Shum. They were a poor but proliffic couple, who had rented the place for many years; and they and their family were squeezed in it pretty tight, I can tell you.

Shum said he had been a hofficer, and so he had. He

had been a sub-deputy assistant vice-commissary, or some such think; and, as I heerd afterwards, had been obliged to leave on account of his *nervousness*. He was such a coward, the fact is, that he was considered dangerous to the harmy, and sent home.

He had married a widow Buckmaster, who had been a Miss Slamcoe. She was a Bristol gal; and her father being a bankrup in the tallow-chandlering way, left, in course, a pretty little sum of money. A thousand pound was settled on her; and she was as high and mighty as if it had been a millium.

Buckmaster died, leaving nothink—nothink except four ugly daughters by Miss Slamcoe; and her forty pound a year was rayther a narrow income for one of her appytite and pretensions. In an unlucky hour for Shum she met him. He was a widower with a little daughter of three years old, a little house at Pentonwille, and a little income about as big as her own. I believe she bullyd the poor creature into marridge; and it was agreed that he should let his ground-floor at John Street, and so add somethink to their means.

They married; and the widow Buckmaster was the grey mare, I can tell you. She was always talking and blustering about her famly, the celebrity of the Buckmasters, and the antickety of the Slamcoes. They had a six-roomed house (not counting kitching and sculry), and now twelve daughters in all; whizz.—4 Miss Buckmasters: Miss Betsy, Miss Dosy, Miss Biddy, and Miss Winny; 1 Miss Shum, Mary by name, Shum's daughter, and seven others, who shall be nameless. Mrs. Shum was a fat, red-haired woman, at least a foot taller than S.; who was but a yard and a half high, pale-faced, red-nosed, knock-knee'd, bald-headed, his nose and shut-frill all brown with snuff.

Before the house was a little garden, where the washin of the famly was all ways hanging. There was so many of 'em that it was obliged to be done by relays. There was six rails and a stocking on each, and four small goosbry bushes, always covered with some bit of linning or other. The hall was a regular puddle: wet dabs of dishclouts flapped in your face; soapy smoking bits of flanning went nigh to choke

you; and while you were looking up to prevent hanging yourself with the ropes which were strung across and about, slap came the hedge of a pail against your shins, till one was like to be drove mad with hagony. The great slattnly doddling girls was always on the stairs, poking about with nasty flower-pots, a-cooking something, or sprawling in the window-seats with greasy curl-papers, reading greasy novls. An infernal pianna was jingling from morning till night—two eldest Miss Buckmasters, "Battle of Prag"—six youngest Miss Shums, "In my Cottage," till I knew every note in the "Battle of Prag," and cussed the day when "In my Cottage" was rote. The younger girls, too, were always bouncing and thumping about the house, with torn pinnyfores, and dogseard grammars, and large pieces of bread and treacle. I never see such a house.

As for Mrs. Shum, she was such a fine lady that she did nothink but lay on the drawing-room sophy, read novels, drink, scold, scream, and go into hystarrix. Little Shum kep reading an old newspaper from week's end to week's end, when he was not engaged in teachin the children, or goin for the beer, or cleanin the shoes; for they kep no servant. This house in John Street was in short a regular Pandymony.

What could have brought Mr. Frederic Altamont to dwell in such a place? The reason is hobvius: he adoared the fust Miss Shum.

And suttnly he did not show a bad taste; for though the other daughters were as ugly as their hideous ma, Mary Shum was a pretty little pink, modest creatur, with glossy black hair and tender blue eyes, and a neck as white as plaster of Parish. She wore a dismal old black gownd, which had grown too short for her, and too tight; but it only served to show her pretty angles and feet, and bewchus figger. Master, though he had looked rather low for the gal of his art, had certainly looked in the right place. Never was one more pretty or more hamiable. I gav her always the buttered toast left from our brexfast, and a cup of tea or chocklate, as Altamont might fancy; and the poor thing was glad enough of it, I can vouch, for they had precious short commons upstairs, and she the least of all.

For it seemed as if which of the Shum famly should try to snub the poor thing most. There was the four Buckmaster girls always at her. It was, Mary, git the coal-skittle; Mary, run down to the public-house for the beer; Mary, I intend to wear your clean stockens out walking, or your new bonnet to church. Only her poor father was kind to her; and he, poor old muff! his kindness was of no use. Mary bore all the scolding like a hangel, as she was—no, not if she had a pair of wings and a goold trumpet, could she have been a greater hangel.

I never shall forgit one seen that took place. It was when Master was in the city, and so, having nothink earthly to do, I happened to be listening on the stairs. The old scolding was a-going on, and the old tune of that hojus "Battle of Prag." Old Shum made some remark; and Miss Buckmaster cried out, "Law, pa, what a fool you are!" All the gals began laffin, and so did Mrs. Shum—all, that is, excep Mary, who turned as red as flams, and going up to Miss Betsy Buckmaster, give her two such wax on her great red ears as made them tingle again.

Old Mrs. Shum screamed, and ran at her like a Bengal tiger. Her great arms went weeling about like a vinmill, as she cuffed and thumped poor Mary for taking her pa's part. Mary Shum, who was always a-crying before, didn't shed a tear now. "I will do it again," she said, "if Betsy insults my father." New thumps, new shreex; and the old horridan went on beatin the poor girl till she was quite exosted, and fell down on the sophy, puffin like a poppus.

"For shame, Mary," began old Shum—"for shame, you naughty gal, you! for hurting the feelings of your dear mamma, and beating kind sister."

"Why, it was because she called you a——"

"If she did, you pert miss," said Shum, looking mighty dignitified, "I could correct her, and not you."

"You correct me, indeed!" said Miss Betsy, turning up her nose, if possible, higher than before; "I should like to see you crect me! Imperence!" and they all began laffin again.

By this time Mrs. S. had recovered from the effex of her exsize, and she began to pour in *her* wolly. Fust she called Mary names, then Shum.

"Oh, why," screeched she, "why did I ever leave a genteel famly, where I ad every ellygance and lucksry, to marry a creatur like this? He is unfit to be called a man, he is unworthy to marry a gentlewoman; and as for that hussy, I disown her. Thank Heaven she an't a Slamcoe; she is only fit to be a Shum!"

"That's true, mamma," said all the gals; for their mother had taught them this pretty piece of manners, and they despised their father heartily: indeed, I have always remarked that, in famlies where the wife is internally talking about the merits of her branch, the husband is invariably a spooney.

Well, when she was exosted again, down she fell on the sofy, at her old trix—more screeching, more convulshuns; and she wouldn't stop, this time, till Shum had got her half a pint of her old remedy, from the "Blue Lion" over the way. She grew more easy as she finished the gin; but Mary was sent out of the room, and told not to come back agin all day.

"Miss Mary," says I—for my heart yurned to the poor gal, as she came sobbing and miserable downstairs—"Miss Mary," says I, "if I might make so bold, here's master's room empty, and I know where the cold bif and pickles is." "Oh, Charles," said she, nodding her head sadly, "I'm too retched to have any happytite." And she flung herself on a chair, and began to cry fit to bust.

At this moment who should come in but my master? I had taken hold of Miss Mary's hand, somehow, and do believe I should have kist it, when, as I said, Haltamont made his appearance. "What's this?" cries he, lookin at me as black as thunder, or as Mr. Phillips as Hickit, in the new tragedy of MacBuff.

"It's only Miss Mary, sir," answered I.

"Get out, sir," says he, as fierce as posbil; and I felt somethink (I think it was the tip of his to) touching me behind, and found myself, nex minit, sprawling among the wet flannings and buckets and things.

The people from upstairs came to see what was the matter, as I was cussin and crying out. "It's only Charles, ma," screamed out Miss Betsy.

"Where's Mary?" says Mrs. Shum, from the sofy.

"She's in master's room, miss," said I.

"She's in the lodger's room, ma!" cried Miss Shum, heckoing me.

"Very good; tell her to stay there till he comes back." And then Miss Shum went bouncing up the stairs again, little knowing of Haltamont's return.

* * * * *

I'd long before observed that my master had an anchoring after Mary Shum; indeed, as I have said, it was purely for her sake that he took and kep his lodgings at Pentonwille. Excep for the sake of love, which is above being mersnary, fourteen shillings a wick was a *little* too strong for two such rat-holes as he lived in. I do blieve the famly had nothing else but their lodger to live on: they brekfisted off his tea-leaves, they cut away pounds and pounds of meat from his jints (he always dined at home), and his baker's bill was at least enough for six. But that wasn't my business. I saw him grin, sometimes, when I laid down the cold bif of a morning, to see how little was left of yesterday's sirline; but he never said a syllabub, for true love don't mind a pound of meat or so hextra.

At first, he was very kind and attentive to all the gals; Miss Betsy, in partickler, grew mighty fond of him. They sat, for whole evenings, playing cribbitch, he taking his pipe and glas, she her tea and muffing; but as it was improper for her to come alone, she brought one of her sisters, and this was genrally Mary—for he made a pint of asking her, too—and one day, when one of the others came instead, he told her, very quitely, that he hadn't invited her; and Miss Buckmaster was too fond of muffings to try this game on again: besides, she was jealous of her three grown sisters, and considered Mary as only a child. Law bless us! how she used to ogle him, and quot bits of pottry, and play "Meet Me by Moonlike," on an old gitter. She reglar flung herself at his head; but he wouldn't have it, bein better ockypied elsewhere.

One night, as genteel as possible, he brought home tickets for "Ashley's," and proposed to take the two young ladies—Miss Betsy and Miss Mary, in course. I recklect he called me aside that afternoon, assuming a solamon and misterus hare. "Charles," said he, "*are you up to snuff?*"

"Why, sir," said I, "I'm genrally considered tolelably downy."

"Well," says he, "I'll give you half a suffering if you can manage this bisniss for me; I've chose a rainy night on purpus. When the theatre is over, you must be waitin with two umbrellows; give me one, and hold the other over Miss Shum. And hark ye, sir, *turn to the right* when you leave the theater, and say the coach is ordered to stand a little way up the street, in order to get rid of the crowd."

We went (in a fly hired by Mr. A.), and never shall I forgit Cartliche's hacting on that memrable night. Talk of Kimble! talk of Magreedy! Ashley's for my money, with Cartlitch in the principal part. But this is nothink to the porpus. When the play was over, I was at the door with the umbrellos. It was raining cats and dogs, sure enough.

Mr. Altamont came out presently, Miss Mary under his arm, and Miss Betsy followin behind, raythe sulky. "This way, sir," cries I, pushin forward; and I threw a great cloak over Miss Betsy, fit to smother her. Mr. A. and Miss Mary skipped on and was out of sight when Miss Betsy's cloak was settled, you may be sure.

"They're only gone to the fly, miss. It's a little way up the street, away from the crowd of carridges." And off we turned *to the right*, and no mistake.

After marchin a little through the plash and mud, "Has anybody seen Coxy's fly?" cries I, with the most innocent haxent in the world.

"Cox's fly!" hollows out one chap. "Is it the vaggin you want?" says another. "I see the blackin wan pass," giggles out another genlmn; and there was such a hinterchange of compliments as you never heerd. I pass them over though, because some of 'em were not wery genteel.

"Law, miss," said I, "what shall I do? My master will never forgive me; and I haven't a single sixpence to pay a coach." Miss Betsy was just going to call one when I said that; but the coachman wouldn't have it at that price, he said, and I knew very well that *she* hadn't four or five shillings to pay for a wehicle. So, in the midst of the tarin rain, at midnight, we had to walk four miles, from Westminster Bridge to Pentonwille; and what was wuss, *I didn't*

happen to know the way. A very nice walk it was, and no mistake.

At about half-past two we got safe to John Street. My master was at the garden gate. Miss Mary flew into Betsy's arms, while master began cussin and swearing at me for disobeying his orders, and *turning to the right instead of to the left!* Law bless me! his hacting of hanger was very near as natral and as terrybl as Mr. Cartlich's in the play.

They had waited half an hour, he said, in the fly, in the little street at the left of the theatre; they had drove up and down in the greatest fright possible; and at last came home, thinking it was in vain to wait any more. They gave her ot rum-and-water and roast oysters for supper, and this consoled her a little.

I hope nobody will cast an imputation on Miss Mary for *her* share in this adventer, for she was as honest a gal as ever lived, and I do believe is ignorant to this day of our little strattygim. Besides, all's fair in love; and as my master could never get to see her alone, on account of her infernal eleven sisters and ma, he took this opportunity of expressin his attachment to her.

If he was in love with her before, you may be sure she paid it him back again now. Ever after the night at Ashley's they were as tender as two tuttle-doves—which fully accounts for the axdent what happened to me, in being kicked out of the room; and in course I bore no mallis.

I don't know whether Miss Betsy still fancied that my master was in love with her, but she loved muffings and tea, and kem down to his parlor as much as ever.

Now comes the sing'lar part of my history.

CHAPTER II.

But who was this genlmn with a fine name—Mr. Frederic Altamont? or what was he? The most mysterus genlmn that ever I knew. Once I said to him on a wery rainy day, "Sir, shall I bring the gig down to your office?" and he gave me one of his black looks and one of his loudest hoaths, and told me to mind my own bizziness, and attend to my orders.

Another day—it was on the day when Miss Mary slapped Miss Betsy's face—Miss M., who adoared him, as I have said already, kep on asking him what was his buth, parentidg, and ediccation. "Dear Frederic," says she, "why this mistry about yourself and your hactions? why hide from your little Mary"—they were as tender as this, I can tell you—"your buth and your professin?"

I spose Mr. Frederic looked black, for I was *only* listening, and he said, in a voice hagitated by amotion, "Mary," said he, "if you love me, ask me this no more: let it be sfishnt for you to know that I am a honest man, and that a secret, what it would be misery for you to larn, must hang over all my actions—that is, from ten o'clock till six."

They went on chaffin and talking in this melumcolly and mysterus way, and I didn't lose a word of what they said; for them houses in Pentonwille have only walls made of pasteboard, and you hear raythe better outside the room than in. But, though he kep up his secret, he swore to her his affektion this day pint blank. Nothing should prevent him, he said, from leading her to the halter, from makin her his adoarable wife. After this was a slight silence. "Dearest Frederic," mummered out miss, speakin as if she was chokin, "I am yours—yours for ever." And then silence agen, and one or two smax, as if there was kissin going on. Here I thought it best to give a rattle at the door-lock, for, as I live, there was old Mrs. Shum a-walkin down the stairs!

It appears that one of the younger gals, a-looking out of the bedrum window, had seen my master come in, and coming down to tea half an hour afterwards, said so in a cussary way. Old Mrs. Shum, who was a dragon of vertyou, cam bustling down the stairs, panting and frowning, as fat and as fierce as a old sow at feedin time.

"Where's the lodger, fellow?" says she to me.

I spoke loud enough to be heard down the street. "If you mean, ma'am, my master, Mr. Frederic Altamont, esquire, he's just stept in, and is puttin on clean shoes in his bedroom."

She said nothink in answer, but flumps past me, and opening the parlor-door, sees master looking very queer, and Miss Mary a-drooping down her head like a pale lily.

"Did you come into my family," says she, "to corrupt my daughters, and to destroy the hinnocence of that infamous gal? Did you come here, sir, as a seducer, or only as a lodger? Speak, sir, speak!"—and she folded her arms quite fierce, and looked like Mrs. Siddums in the Tragic Mews.

"I came here, Mrs. Shum," said he, "because I loved your daughter, or I never would have condescended to live in such a beggarly hole. I have treated her in every respect like a genlmn, and she is as hinnocent now, ma'am, as she was when she was born. If she'll marry me, I am ready; if she'll leave you, she shall have a home where she shall be neither bullyd nor starved—no hangry frumps of sisters, no cross mother-in-law, only an affeckshnat husband, and all the pure pleasures of Hyming."

Mary flung herself into his arms. "Dear, dear Frederic," says she, "I'll never leave you."

"Miss," says Mrs. Shum, "you ain't a Slamcoe nor yet a Buckmaster, thank God. You may marry this person if your pa thinks proper, and he may insult me—brave me—trample on my feelinx in my own house—and there's no-o-o-obody by to defend me."

I knew what she was going to be at: on came her histarrix agen, and she began screechin and roarin like mad. Down comes of course the eleven gals and old Shum. There was a pretty row. "Look here, sir," says she, "at the conduck of your precious trull of a daughter—alone with this man, kissin and dandlin, and Lawd knows what besides."

"What, he?" cries Miss Betsy—"he in love with Mary! Oh, the wretch, the monster, the deceiver!"—and she falls down too, screeching away as loud as her mamma, for the silly creature fancied still that Altamont had a fondness for her.

"*Silence these women!*" shouts out Altamont, thundering loud. "I love your daughter, Mr. Shum. I will take her without a penny, and can afford to keep her. If you don't give her to me, she'll come of her own will. Is that enough? —may I have her?"

"We'll talk of this matter, sir," says Mr. Shum, looking as high and mighty as an alderman. "Gals, go upstairs with your dear mamma." And they all trooped up again, and so the skrimmage ended.

You may be sure that old Shum was not very sorry to get a husband for his daughter Mary, for the old creatur loved her better than all the pack which had been brought him or born to him by Mrs. Buckmaster. But, strange to say, when he came to talk of settlements and so forth, not a word would my master answer. He said he made four hundred a year reglar—he wouldn't tell how—but Mary, if she married him, must share all that he had, and ask no questions; only this he would say, as he'd said before, that he was a honest man.

They were married in a few days, and took a very genteel house at Islington; but still my master went away to business, and nobody knew where. Who could he be?

CHAPTER III.

If ever a young kipple in the middlin classes began life with a chance of happiness, it was Mr. and Mrs. Frederic Altamont. Their house at Cannon Row, Islington, was as comfortable as house could be. Carpited from top to to; pore's rates small; furnitur elygant; and three deomestix, of which I, in course, was one. My life wasn't so easy as in Mr. A.'s bachelor days; but what then? The three W.'s is my maxum—plenty of work, plenty of wittles, and plenty of wages. Altamont kep his gig no longer, but went to the city in an omlibuster.

One would have thought, I say, that Mrs. A., with such an effeckshnut husband, might have been as happy as her blessid majisty. Nothink of the sort. For the fust six months it was all very well; but then she grew gloomier and gloomier, though A. did everythink in life to please her.

Old Shum used to come reglarly four times a wick to Cannon Row, where he lunched, and dined, and teed, and supd. The pore little man was a thought too fond of wine and spirits; and many and many's the night that I've had to support him home. And you may be sure that Miss Betsy did not now desert her sister: she was at our place mornink, noon, and night—not much to my mayster's liking, though he was too good-natured to wex his wife in trifles.

But Betsy never had forgotten the recollection of old days, and hated Altamont like the foul feind. She put all kind of bad things into the head of poor innocent missis; who, from being all gaiety and cheerfulness, grew to be quite melumcolly and pale, and retchid, just as if she had been the most misrable woman in the world.

In three months more, a baby comes, in course, and with it old Mrs. Shum, who stuck to Mrs'. side as close as a wampire, and made her retchider and retchider. She used to bust into tears when Altamont came home: she used to sigh and wheep over the pore child, and say, "My child, my child, your father is false to me;" or, "Your father deceives me;" or, "What will you do when your pore mother is no more?" or such like sentimental stuff.

It all came from Mother Shum, and her old trix, as I soon found out. The fact is, when there is a mistry of this kind in the house, it's a servant's *duty* to listen; and listen I did, one day when Mrs. was cryin as usual, and fat Mrs. Shum a sittin consolin her, as she called it—though, Heaven knows, she only grew wuss and wuss for the consolation.

Well, I listened; Mrs. Shum was a-rockin the baby, and missis cryin as yousual.

"Pore dear innocint," says Mrs. S., heavin a great sigh, "you're the child of a unknown father and a misrabble mother."

"Don't speak ill of Frederic, mamma," says missis; "he is all kindness to me."

"All kindness, indeed! yes, he gives you a fine house, and a fine gownd, and a ride in a fly whenever you please; but *where does all his money come from?* Who is he—what is he? Who knows that he mayn't be a murderer, or a housebreaker, or a utterer of forged notes? How can he make his money honestly, when he won't say where he gets it? Why does he leave you eight hours every blessid day, and won't say where he goes to? Oh, Mary, Mary, you are the most injured of women!"

And with this Mrs. Shum began sobbin; and Miss Betsy began yowling like a cat in a gitter; and pore missis cried, too—tears is so remarkable infeckshus.

"Perhaps, mamma," wimpered out she, "Frederic is a

shopboy, and don't like me to know that he is not a gentleman."

"A shopboy," says Betsy; "he a shopboy! O no, no, no! more likely a wretched willain of a murderer, stabbin and robing all day, and feedin you with the fruits of his ill-gotten games!"

More crying and screechin here took place, in which the baby joined; and made a very pretty consort, I can tell you.

"He can't be a robber," cries missis; "he's too good, too kind, for that; besides, murdering is done at night, and Frederic is always home at eight."

"But he can be a forger," says Betsy, "a wicked, wicked *forger*. Why does he go away every day? To forge notes, to be sure. Why does he go to the city? To be near banks and places, and so do it more at his convenience."

"But he brings home a sum of money every day—about thirty shillings—sometimes fifty; and then he smiles, and says it's a good day's work. This is not like a forger," said pore Mrs. A.

"I have it—I have it!" screams out Mrs. S. "The villain—the sneaking, double-faced Jonas! he's married to somebody else he is, and that's why he leaves you, the base biggymist!"

At this, Mrs. Altamont, struck all of a heap, fainted clean away. A dreadful business it was—hystarrix; then hystarrix, in course, from Mrs. Shum; bells ringin, child squalin, suvvants tearin up and down stairs with hot water! If ever there is a noosance in the world, it's a house where faintain is always goin on. I wouldn't live in one—no, not to be groom of the chambers, and git two hundred a year.

It was eight o'clock in the evenin when this row took place; and such a row it was, that nobody but me heard master's knock. He came in, and heard the hooping, and screeching, and roaring. He seemed very much frightened at first, and said, "What is it?"

"Mrs. Shum's here," says I, "and Mrs. in astarrix."

Altamont looked as black as thunder, and growled out a word which I don't like to name—let it suffice that it begins with a *d* and ends with a *nation;* and he tore up stairs like mad.

He bust open the bedroom door; missis lay quite pale and stony on the sofy; the babby was screechin from the craddle; Miss Betsy was sprawlin over missis; and Mrs. Shum half on the bed and half on the ground—all howlin and squeelin, like so many dogs at the moond.

When A. came in, the mother and daughter stopped all of a sudding. There had been one or two tiffs before between them, and they feared him as if he had been a hogre.

"What's this infernal screeching and crying about?" says he. "Oh, Mr. Altamont," cries the old woman, "you know too well; it's about you that this darling child is misrabble!"

"And why about me, pray, madam?"

"Why, sir, dare you ask why? Because you deceive her, sir; because you are a false, cowardly traitor, sir; because *you have a wife elsewhere, sir!*" And the old lady and Miss Betsy began to roar again as loud as ever.

Altamont pawsed for a minnit, and then flung the door wide open; nex he seized Miss Betsy as if his hand were a vice, and he world her out of the room; then up he goes to Mrs. S. "Get up," says he, thundering loud, "you lazy, trollopping, mischief-making, lying old fool! Get up, and get out of this house. You have been the cuss and bain of my happyniss since you entered it. With your d—d lies, and novvle reading, and histerrix, you have perwerted Mary, and made her almost as mad as yourself."

"My child! my child!" shriex out Mrs. Shum, and clings round missis. But Altamont ran between them, and griping the old lady by her arm, dragged her to the door. "Follow your daughter, ma'am," says he, and down she went. "*Chawls, see those ladies to the door*," he hollows out, "and never let them pass it again." We walked down together, and off they went: and master locked and double-locked the bedroom door after him, intendin, of course, to have a *tater-tator* (as they say) with his wife. You may be sure that I followed upstairs again pretty quick, to hear the result of their confidence.

As they say at St. Stevenses, it was rayther a stormy debate. "Mary," says master, "you're no longer the merry grateful gal I knew and loved at Pentonwill; there's some secret a pressin on you; there's no smilin welcom for me

now, as there used formly to be! Your mother and sister-in-law have perwerted you, Mary; and that's why I've drove them from this house, which they shall not re-enter in my life."

"O Frederic! it's *you* is the cause, and not I. Why do you have any mistry from me? Where do you spend your days? Why did you leave me, even on the day of your marridge, for eight hours, and continue to do so every day?"

"Because," says he, "I makes my livelihood by it. I leave you, and don't tell you *how* I make it, for it would make you none the happier to know."

It was in this way the convysation ren on—more tears and questions on my missises part, more sturmness and silence on my master's: it ended for the first time since their marridge, in a reglar quarrel. Wery difrent, I can tell you, from all the hammerous billing and kewing which had proceeded their nupshuls.

Master went out, slamming the door in a fury, as well he might. Says he, "If I can't have a comforable life, I can have a jolly one;" and so he went off to the hed tavern, and came home that evening beesly intawsicated. When high words begin in a family drink generally follows on the genlman's side; and then, fearwell to all conjubial happyniss! These two pipple, so fond and loving, were now sirly, silent, and full of il wil. Master went out earlier, and came home later; missis cried more, and looked even paler than before.

Well, things went on in this uncomfortable way—master still in the mopes, missis tempted by the deamons of jellosy and curosity—until a singlar axident brought to light all the goings on of Mr. Altamont.

It was the tenth of January; I recklect the day, for old Shum gev me half-a-crownd (the fust and last of his money I ever see, by the way): he was dining along with master, and they were making merry together.

Master said, as he was mixing his fifth tumler of punch, and little Shum his twelfth or so—master said, "I see you twice in the City to-day, Mr. Shum."

"Well, that's curous!" says Shum. "I *was* in the City. To-day's the day when the divvydins (God bless 'em) is paid;

and me and Mrs. S. went for our half-year's inkem. But we only got out of the coach, crossed the street to the Bank, took our money, and got in agen. How could you see me twice?"

Altamont stuttered and stammered, and hemd and hawd. "O!" says he, "I was passing—passing as you went in and out." And he instantly turned the conversation, and began talking about pollytix, or the weather, or some such stuff.

"Yes, my dear," said my missis, "but how could you see papa *twice?*" Master didn't answer, but talked pollytix more than ever. Still she would continy on. "Where was you, my dear, when you saw pa? What were you doing, my love, to see pa twice?" and so forth. Master looked angrier and angrier, and his wife only pressed him wuss and wuss.

This was, as I said, little Shum's twelfth tumler; and I knew pritty well that he could git very little further; for, as reglar as the thirteenth came, Shum was drunk. The thirteenth did come, and its consquinzes. I was obliged to leed him home to John Street, where I left him in the hangry arms of Mrs. Shum.

"How the d—," sayd he all the way, "how the d-dd—the deddy—deddy—devil—could he have seen me *twice?*"

CHAPTER IV.

It was a sad slip on Altamont's part, for no sooner did he go out the next morning than missis went out too. She tor down the street, and never stopped till she came to her pa's house at Pentonwill. She was clositid for an hour with her ma, and when she left her she drove straight to the City. She walked before the Bank, and behind the Bank, and round the Bank: she came home disperryted, having learned nothink.

And it was now an extraordinary thing that from Shum's house for the next ten days there was nothing but expyditions into the City. Mrs. S., tho her dropsicle legs had never carred her half so fur before, was eternally on the *key veve*, as the French say. If she didn't go, Miss Betsy did, or misses did: they seemed to have an attrackshun to the Bank, and went there as natral as an omlibus.

At last one day, old Mrs. Shum comes to our house—(she wasn't admitted when master was there, but came still in his absints)—and she wore a hair of tryumph, as she entered. "Mary," says she, "where is the money your husbind brought to you yesterday?" My master used always to give it to missis when he returned.

"The money, ma!" says Mary. "Why, here." And pulling out her puss, she showed a sovrin, a good heap of silver, and an odd-looking little coin.

"THAT'S IT! that's it!" cried Mrs. S. "A Queene Anne's sixpence, isn't it, dear—dated seventeen hundred and three?"

It was so, sure enough—a Queen Ans sixpence of that very date.

"Now, my love," says she, "I have found him! Come with me to-morrow, and you shall KNOW ALL!"

And now comes the end of my story.

* * * * *

The ladies nex morning set out for the City, and I walked behind, doing the genteel thing, with a nosegy and a goold stick. We walked down the New Road—we walked down the City Road—we walked to the Bank. We were crossing from that heddyfiz to the other side of Cornhill, when all of a sudden missis shreeked, and fainted spontaceously away.

I rushed forrard, and raised her to my arms, spiling thereby a new weskit and a pair of crimson smalcloes. I rushed forrard, I say, very nearly knocking down the old sweeper, who was hobbling away as fast as posibil. We took her to Birch's; we provided her with a hackney-coach and every lucksury, and carried her home to Islington.

* * * * *

That night master never came home. Nor the nex night, nor the nex. On the fourth day an octioneer arrived: he took an infantry of the furnitur, and placed a bill in the window.

At the end of the wick Altamont made his appearance. He was haggard and pale; not so haggard, however, not so pale as his misrable wife.

He looked at her very tendrilly. I may say, it's from him that I coppied *my* look to Miss ——. He looked at her very tendrilly and held out his arms. She gev a suffycating shreek, and rusht into his umbraces.

"Mary," says he, "you know all now. I have sold my place; I have got three thousand pounds for it, and saved two more. I've sold my house and furnitur, and that brings me another. We'll go abroad and love each other, has formly."

And now you ask me, Who he was? I shudder to relate. —Mr. Haltamont SWEP THE CROSSIN FROM THE BANK TO CORNHILL!

Of cors, *I* left his servis. I met him, few years after, at Badden-Badden, where he and Mrs. A. were much respectid, and pass for pipple of propaty.

THE AMOURS OF MR. DEUCEACE.

DIMOND CUT DIMOND.

THE name of my nex master was, if posbil, still more ellygant and youfonious than that of my fust. I now found myself boddy servant to the Honrabble Halgernon Percy Deuceace, youngest and fifth son of the Earl of Crabs.

Halgernon was a barrystir—that is, he lived in Pump Cort, Temple; a wulgar naybrood, witch praps my readers don't no. Suffiz it to say, it's on the confines of the citty, and the chosen aboad of the lawyers of this metrappolish.

When I say that Mr. Deuceace was a barrystir, I don't mean that he went sesshums or surcoats (as they call 'em), but simply that he kep chambers, lived in Pump Cort, and looked out for a commitionarship, or a revisinship, or any other place that the Wig guvvyment could give him. His father was a Wig pier (as the landriss told me), and had been a Toary pier. The fack is, his lordship was so poar that he would be anythink or nothink, to get provisions for his sons and an inkum for himself.

I phansy that he aloud Halgernon two hundred a year; and it would have been a very comforable maintenants, only he knever paid him.

Owever, the young genlmn was a genlmn, and no mistake; he got his allowents of nothink a year, and spent it in the most honrabble and fashnabble manner. He kep a kab—he

went to Holmax—and Crockfud's—he moved in the most xquizzit suckles, and trubbld the law boox very little, I can tell you. Those fashnabble gents have ways of getten money witch comman pipple doant understand.

Though he only had a therd floar in Pump Cort, he lived as if he had the welth of Cresas. The tenpun notes floo abowt as common as haypince—clarrit and shampang was at his house as vulgar as gin; and verry glad I was, to be sure, to be a valley to a zion of the nobillaty.

Deuceace had, in his sittin-room, a large pictur on a sheet of paper. The names of his family was wrote on it; it was wrote in the shape of a tree, a-groin out of a man-in-armer's stomick, and the names were on little plates among the bows. The pictur said that the Deuceaces kem into England in the year 1066, along with William Conqueruns. My master called it his podygree. I do bleev it was because he had this pictur, and because he was the *Honrabble* Deuceace, that he mannitched to live as he did. If he had been a common man, you'd have said he was no better than a swinler. It's only rank and buth that can warrant such singularities as my master show'd. For it's no use disgysing it—the Honrabble Halgernon was a GAMBLER. For a man of wulgar family, it's the wust trade that can be; for a man of common feelinx of honesty, this profession is quite imposbil; but for a real thoroughbread genlmn, it's the esiest and most prophetable line he can take.

It may praps appear curious that such a fashnable man should live in the Temple; but it must be recklected that it's not only lawyers who live in what's called the Ins of Cort. Many batchylers, who have nothink to do with lor, have here there loginx; and many sham barrysters, who never put on a wig and gownd twise in their lives, kip apartments in the Temple, instead of Bon Street, Pickledilly, or other fashnabble places.

Frinstance, on our stairkis (so these houses are called) there was 8 sets of chamberses, and only 3 lawyers. These was bottom floar, Screwson, Hewson, and Jewson, attorneys; fust floar, Mr. Sergeant Flabber—opsite, Mr. Counslor Bruffy; and secknd pair, Mr. Haggerstony, an Irish counslor, praktising at the Old Baly, and lickwise what they call re-

porter to the *Morning Post* nyouspapper. Opsite him was wrote—

Mr. RICHARD BLEWITT;

and on the thud floar, with my master, lived one Mr. Dawkins.

This young fellow was a new comer into the Temple, and unlucky it was for him too—he'd better have never been born; for it's my firm apinion that the Temple ruined him—that is, with the help of my master and Mr. Dick Blewitt, as you shall hear.

Mr. Dawkins, as I was gave to understand by his young man, had jest left the Universary of Oxford, and had a pretty little fortn of his own—six thousand pound or so—in the stox. He was jest of age, an orfin who had lost his father and mother; and having distinkwished hisself at Collitch, where he gained seffral prices, was come to town to push his fortn, and study the barryster's bisness.

Not bein of a very high fammly hisself—indeed, I've heard say his father was a chismonger, or something of that lo sort—Dawkins was glad to find his old Oxford frend, Mr. Blewitt, yonger son to rich Squire Blewitt, of Listershire, and to take rooms so near him.

Now, tho' there was a considdrable intimacy between me and Mr. Blewitt's gentleman, there was scarcely any betwixt our masters—mine being too much of the aristoxy to associate with one of Mr. Blewitt's sort. Blewitt was what they call a bettin man; he went reglar to Tattlesall's, kep a pony, wore a white hat, a blue berd's-eye handkercher, and a cut-away coat. In his manners he was the very contrary of my master, who was a slim, ellygant man as ever I see; he had very white hands, raythor a sallow face, with sharp dark ise, and small wiskus neatly trimmed and as black as Warren's jet; he spoke very low and soft; he seemed to be watchin the person with whom he was in convysation, and always flatterd everybody. As for Blewitt, he was quite of another sort. He was always swearin, singing, and slappin people on the back, as hearty as posbill. He seemed a merry, careless, honest cretur, whom one would trust with life and soul. So thought Dawkins, at least; who, though a quiet young man, fond of his boox, novvles, Byron's poems, floot-playing, and

such-like scientafic amusemints, grew hand in glove with honest Dick Blewitt, and soon after with my master, the Honrabble Halgernon. Poor Daw! he thought he was makin good connexions and real friends: he had fallen in with a couple of the most etrocious swinlers that ever lived.

Before Mr. Dawkins's arrivial in our house, Mr. Deuceace had barely condysended to speak to Mr. Blewitt; it was only about a month after that suckumstance that my master, all of a sudding, grew very friendly with him. The reason was pretty clear—Deuceace *wanted him*. Dawkins had not been an hour in master's company before he knew that he had a pidgin to pluck.

Blewitt knew this too, and bein very fond of pidgin, intended to keep this one entirely to himself. It was amusin to see the Honrabble Halgernon manuvring to get this pore bird out of Blewitt's clause, who thought he had it safe. In fact, he'd brought Dawkins to these chambers for that very porpus, thinking to have him under his eye, and strip him at leisure.

My master very soon found out what was Mr. Blewitt's game. Gamblers know gamblers, if not by instink, at least by reputation; and though Mr. Blewitt moved in a much lower spear than Mr. Deuceace, they knew each other's dealins and caracters puffickly well.

"Charles, you scoundrel," says Deuceace to me one day (he always spoak in that kind way), "who is this person that has taken the opsit chambers, and plays the flute so industrusly?"

"It's Mr. Dawkins, a rich young gentleman from Oxford, and a great frend of Mr. Blewittses, sir," says I; "they seem to live in each other's rooms."

Master said nothink, but he *grin'd*—my eye, how he did grin! Not the fowl find himself could snear more satannickly.

I knew what he meant:—

Imprimish. A man who plays the floot is a simpleton.

Secknly. Mr. Blewitt is a raskle.

Thirdmo. When a raskle and a simpleton is always together, and when the simpleton is *rich*, one knows pretty well what will come of it.

I was but a lad in them days, but I knew what was what, as well as my master; it's not gentlemen only that's up to

snough. Law bless us! there was four of us on this stairkes, four as nice young men as you ever see—Mr. Bruffy's young man, Mr. Dawkinses, Mr. Blewitt's, and me; and we knew what our masters was about as well as they did theirselfs. Frinstance, I can say this for *myself*, there wasn't a paper in Deuceace's desk or drawer, not a bill, a note, or mimerandum, which I hadn't read as well as he: with Blewitt's it was the same—me and his young man used to read 'em all. There wasn't a bottle of wine that we didn't get a glass out of, nor a pound of sugar that we didn't have some lumps of it. We had keys to all the cubbards; we pipped into all the letters that kem and went; we pored over all the bill-files; we'd the best pickens out of the dinners, the livvers of the fowls, the force-mit balls out of the soup, the eggs from the sallit. As for the coals and candles, we left them to the landrisses. You may call this robry. Nonsince! it's only our rights; a suvvant's purquizzits is as sacred as the laws of Hengland.

Well, the long and short of it is this. Richard Blewitt, esquire, was sityouated as follows:—He'd an incum of three hunderd a year from his father. Out of this he had to pay one hunderd and ninety for money borrowed by him at collidge, seventy for chambers, seventy more for his hoss, aty for his suvvant on bord wagis, and about three hunderd and fifty for a sepparat establishmint in the Regency Park; besides this, his pockit-money, say a hunderd, his eatin, drinkin, and wine-marchant's bill, about two hunderd moar. So that you see he laid by a pretty handsome sum at the end of the year.

My master was diffrent; and being a more fashnabble man than Mr. B., in course he owed a deal more money. There was fust:—

Account *contray*, at Crockford's	£3711	0	0
Bills of xchange and I. O. U.'s (but he didn't pay these in most cases)	4963	0	0
21 tailors' bills, in all	1306	11	9
3 hossdealers' do	402	0	0
2 coachbilder	506	0	0
Bills contracted at Cambritch	2193	6	8
Sundries	987	10	0
	£14069	8	5

I give this as a curosity—pipple doant know how in many cases fashnabble life is carried on; and to know even what a real gnlmn *owes* is somethink instructif and agreeable.

But to my tail. The very day after my master had made the inquiries concerning Mr. Dawkins, witch I mentioned already, he met Mr. Blewitt on the stairs; and byoutiffle it was to see how this gnlmn, who had before been almost cut by my master, was now received by him. One of the sweatest smiles I ever saw was now vizzable on Mr. Deuceace's countenance. He held out his hand, covered with a white kid glove, and said in the most frenly tone of vice posbill, "What! Mr. Blewitt? It is an age since we met. What a shame that such near naybors should see each other so seldom!"

Mr. Blewitt, who was standing at his door, in a pe-green dressing-gown, smoakin a segar, and singin a hunting coarus, looked surprised, flattered, and then suspicious.

"Why, yes," says he, "it is, Mr. Deuceace, a long time."

"Not, I think, since we dined at Sir George Hookey's. By-the-bye, what an evening that was—hay, Mr. Blewitt? What wine! what capital songs! I recollect your 'May-day in the morning'—cuss me, the best comick song I ever heard. I was speaking to the Duke of Doncaster about it only yesterday. You know the duke, I think?"

Mr. Blewitt said, quite surly, "No, I don't."

"Not know him!" cries master; "why, hang it, Blewitt, he knows *you;* as every sporting man in England does, I should think. Why, man, your good things are in every-body's mouth at Newmarket."

And so master went on chaffin Mr. Blewitt. That genlmn at fust answered him quite short and angry; but, after a little more flummery, he grew as pleased as posbill, took in all Deuceace's flatry, and bleeved all his lies. At last the door shut, and they both went into Mr. Blewitt's chambers together.

Of course I can't say what past there; but in an hour master kem up to his own room as yaller as mustard, and smellin sadly of backo-smoke. I never see any genlmn more sick than he was; *he'd been smoakin seagars* along with Blewitt. I said nothink, in course, tho I'd often heard him

xpress his horrow of backo, and knew very well he would as soon swallow pizon as smoke. But he wasn't a chap to do a thing without a reason: if he'd been smoakin, I warrant he had smoaked to some porpus.

I didn't hear the convysation between 'em; but Mr. Blewitt's man did: it was—"Well, Mr. Blewitt, what capital seagars! Have you one for a friend to smoak?" (The old fox, it wasn't only the *seagars* he was a-smoakin!) "Walk in," says Mr. Blewitt; and they began a chaffin together—master very ankshous about the young gintleman who had come to live in our chambers, Mr. Dawkins, and always coming back to that subject, saying that people on the same stairkis ot to be frenly; how glad he'd be, for his part, to know Mr. Dick Blewitt, and *any friend of his*, and so on. Mr. Dick, howsever, seamed quite aware of the trap laid for him. "I really don't no this Dawkins," says he: "he's a chismonger's son, I hear; and tho I've exchanged visits with him, I doant intend to continyou the acquaintance, not wishin to assoshate with that kind of pipple." So they went on, master fishin, and Mr. Blewitt not wishin to take the hook at no price.

"Confound the vulgar thief!" muttard my master, as he was laying on his sophy, after being so very ill; "I've poisoned myself with his infernal tobacco, and he has foiled me. The cursed swindling boor! he thinks he'll ruin this poor cheesemonger, does he? I'll step in, and *warn* him."

I thought I should bust a-laffin when he talked in this style. I knew very well what his "warning" meant—lockin the stable-door, but stealin the hoss fust.

Next day, his strattygam for becoming acquainted with Mr. Dawkins we exicuted; and very pritty it was.

Besides potry and the floote, Mr. Dawkins, I must tell you, had some other parshallities—wiz., he was very fond of good eatin and drinkin. After doddling over his music and boox all day, this young genlmn used to sally out of evenings, dine sumptiously at a tavern, drinkin all sots of wine along with his friend Mr. Blewitt. He was a quiet young fellow enough at fust; but it was Mr. B. who (for his own porpuses, no doubt) had got him into this kind of life. Well, I needn't say that he who eats a fine dinner, and drinks too much

overnight, wants a bottle of soda-water, and a gril, praps, in the morning. Such was Mr. Dawkinses case; and reglar almost as twelve o'clock came, the waiter from "Dix Coffy-House" was to be seen on our stairkis, bringing up Mr. D.'s hot breakfast.

No man would have thought there was anythink in such a trifling cirkumstance; master did, though, and pounced upon it like a cock on a barlycorn.

He sent me out to Mr. Morell's in Pickledilly, for wot's called a Strasbug-pie—in French, a "*patty defau graw.*" He takes a card, and nails it on the outside case (patty defaw graws come generally in a round wooden box, like a drumb); and what do you think he writes on it? why, as follos:—"*For the Honourable Algernon Percy Deuceace, &c. &c. &c. With Prince Talleyrand's compliments.*"

Prince Tallyram's complimints, indeed! I laff when I think of it, still, the old surpint! He *was* a surpint, that Deuceace, and no mistake.

Well, by a most extrornary piece of ill-luck, the nex day punctially as Mr. Dawkinses brexfas was coming *up* the stairs, Mr. Halgernon Percy Deuceace was going *down*. He was as gay as a lark, humming an Oppra tune, and twizzting round his head his hevy gold-headed cane. Down he went very fast, and by a most unlucky axdent struck his cane against the waiter's tray, and away went Mr. Dawkinses gril, kayann, kitchup, soda-water and all! I can't think how my master should have choas such an exact time; to be sure, his windo looked upon the cort, and he could see every one who came into our door.

As soon as the axdent had took place, master was in such a rage as, to be sure, no man ever was in before: he swoar at the waiter in the most dreddfle way; he threatened him with his stick, and it was only when he see that the waiter was raythera bigger man than hisself that he was in the least pazzyfied. He returned to his own chambres; and John, the waiter, went off for more gril to Dixes Coffy-House.

"This is a most unlucky axdent, to be sure, Charles," says master to me, after a few minits paws, during witch he had been and wrote a note, put it into an anvelope, and sealed it with his bigg seal of arms. "But stay—a thought strikes me

glad I am to see you! Mr. Dawkins and I were just talking about your pony! Pray sit down."

Blewitt did. And now was the question, who should sit the other out; but, law bless you, Mr. Blewitt was no match for my master: all the time he was fidgetty, silent, and sulky; on the contry, master was charmin. I never herd such a flo of conversatin, or so many wittacisms as he uttered. At last, completely beat, Mr. Blewitt took his leaf; that instant master followed him, and passin his arm through that of Mr. Dick, led him into our chambers, and began talkin to him in the most affabl and affeckshnat manner.

But Dick was too angry to listen: at last, when master was telling him some long story about the Duke of Doncaster, Blewitt burst out,—

"A plague on the Duke of Doncaster! Come, come, Mr. Deuceace, don't you be running your rigs upon me; I an't the man to be bamboozl'd by long-winded stories about dukes and duchesses. You think I don't know you; every man knows you and your line of country. Yes, you're after young Dawkins there, and think to pluck him; but you shan't—no, by ——, you shan't." (The reader must recklect that the oaths which interspussed Mr. B.'s convysation I have lift out.) Well, after he'd fired a volley of em, Mr. Deuceace spoke as cool as possbill.

"Heark ye, Blewitt. I know you to be one of the most infernal thieves and scoundrels unhung. If you attempt to hector with me, I will cane you; if you want more, I'll shoot you; if you meddle between me and Dawkins, I will do both. I know your whole life, you miserable swindler and coward. I know you have already won two hunderd pounds of this lad, and want all. I will have half, or you never shall have a penny." It's quite true that master knew things; but how was the wonder.

I couldn't see Mr. B.'s face during this dialogue, bein on the wrong side of the door; but there was a considdrable paws after thuse complymints had passed between the two genlmn—one walkin quickly up and down the room; tother, angry and stupid, sittin down, and stampin with his foot.

"Now listen to this, Mr. Blewitt," continues master at last. "If you're quiet, you shall half this fellow's money; but

venture to win a shilling from him in my absence, or without my consent, and you do it at your peril."

"Well, well, Mr. Deuceace," cries Dick, "it's very hard, and I must say not fair: the game was of my startin, and you've no right to interfere with my friend."

"Mr. Blewitt, you are a fool! You professed yesterday not to know this man, and I was obliged to find him out for myself. I should like to know by what law of honour I am bound to give him up to you."

It was charmin to hear this pair of raskles talkin about *honour*. I declare I could have found it in my heart to warn young Dawkins of the precious way in which these chaps were going to serve him. But if *they* didn't know what honour was, *I* did; and never, never did I tell tails about my masters when in their sarvice—*out*, in cors, the hobligation is no longer binding.

Well, the nex day there was a gran dinner at our chambers—white soop, turbit, and lobstir sos; saddil of Scoch muttn, grous, and M'Arony; wines, shampang, hock, maderia, a bottle of poart, and ever so many of clarrit. The compny presint was three—wiz., the Honrabble A. P. Deuceace, R. Blewitt, and Mr. Dawkins, Exquires. My i, how we genlmn in the kitchin did enjy it! Mr. Blewittes man eat so much grous (when it was brot out of the parlor) that I reely thought he would be sik; Mr. Dawkinses genlmn (who was only abowt 13 years of age) grew so il with M'Arony and plumb-puddn as to be obleeged to take sefral of Mr. D.'s pils, which ½ kild him. But this is all promiscuous: I an't talkin of the survants now, but the masters.

Would you bleeve it? After dinner and praps 8 bottles of wine between the 3, the genlm sat down to *écarty*. It's a game where only 2 plays, and where, in coarse, when there's only 3, one looks on.

Fust they playd crown pints, and a pound the bett. At this game they were wonderful equill; and about supper-time (when grilled am, more shampang, devld biskits, and other things, was brot in) the play stood thus: Mr. Dawkins had won 2 pounds; Mr. Blewitt, 30 shillings; the Honrabble Mr. Deuceace having lost £3 10s. After the devvle and the shampang the play was a little higher. Now it was

pound pints, and five pound the bet. I thought, to be sure, after hearing the complymints between Blewitt and master in the morning, that now poor Dawkins's time was come.

Not so: Dawkins won always, Mr. B. betting on his play, and giving him the very best of advice. At the end of the evening (which was abowt five o'clock the nex morning) they stopt. Master was counting up the skore on a card.

"Blewitt," says he, "I've been unlucky. I owe you—let me see—yes, five-and-forty pounds!"

"Five-and-forty," says Blewitt, "and no mistake!"

"I will give you a cheque," says the honrabble genlmn.

"Oh, don't mention it, my dear sir!" But master got a grate sheet of paper, and drew him a check on Messeers. Pump, Algit and Co., his bankers.

"Now," says master, "I've got to settle with you, my dear Mr. Dawkins. If you had backd your luck, I should have owed you a very handsome sum of money. *Voyons*, thirteen points at a pound—it is easy to calculate;" and drawin out his puss, he clinked over the table 13 goolden suverings, which shon till they made my eyes wink.

So did pore Dawkinses, as he put out his hand, all trembling, and drew them in.

"Let me say," added master, "let me say (and I've had some little experience) that you are the very best *écarté* player with whom I ever sat down."

Dawkinses eyes glissened as he put the money up, and said, "Law, Deuceace, you flatter me."

Flatter him! I should think he did. It was the very think which master ment.

"But mind you, Dawkins," continyoud he, "I must have my revenge; for I'm ruined—positively ruined—by your luck."

"Well, well," says Mr. Thomas Smith Dawkins, as pleased as if he had gained a millium, "shall it be to-morrow?—Blewitt, what say you?"

Mr. Blewitt agreed, in course. My master, after a little demurring, consented too. "We'll meet," says he, "at your chambers. But mind, my dear fello, not too much wine: I can't stand it at any time, especially when I have to play *écarté* with *you*."

Pore Dawkins left our rooms as happy as a prins. "Here, Charles," says he, and flung me a sovring. Pore fellow, pore fellow! I knew what was a-comin!

But the best of it was, that these 13 sovrings which Dawkins won, *master had borrowed them from Mr. Blewitt!* I brought 'em, with 7 more, from that young genlmn's chambers that very morning; for since his interview with master, Blewitt had nothing to refuse him.

Well, shall I continue the tail? If Mr. Dawkins had been the least bit wiser, it would have taken him six months befoar he lost his money; as it was, he was such a confounded ninny that it took him a very short time to part with it.

Nex day (it was Thursday, and master's acquaintance with Mr. Dawkins had only commenced on Tuesday), Mr. Dawkins, as I said, gev his party—dinner at 7. Mr. Blewitt and the two Mr. D's as befoar. Play begins at 11. This time I knew the bisniss was pretty serious, for we suvvants was packed off to bed at 2 o'clock. On Friday I went to chambers: no master—he kem in for 5 minutes at about 12, made a little toilit, ordered more devvles and soda-water, and back again he went to Mr. Dawkins's.

They had dinner there at 7 again; but nobody seamed to eat, for all the vittles came out to us genlmn: they had in more wine though, and must have drunk at least 2 dozen in the 36 hours.

At ten o'clock, however, on Friday night, back my master came to his chambers. I saw him as I never saw him before—namely, reglar drunk. He staggered about the room, he danced, he hickipd, he swoar, he flung me a heap of silver, and, finely, he sunk down exosted on his bed; I pullin off his boots and close, and making him comfrabble.

When I had removed his garmints, I did what it's the duty of every servant to do—I emtied his pockits, and looked at his pockit-book and all his letters: a number of axdents have been prevented that way.

I found there, among a heap of things, the following pretty dockyment:—

I. O. U.
£4700.
THOMAS SMITH DAWKINS.
Friday, 16th January.

There was another bit of paper of the same kind—"I. O. U. four hundred pounds.—Richard Blewitt;" but this, in corse, ment nothink.

* * * * *

Nex mornin, at nine, master was up, and as sober as a judg. He drest, and was off to Mr. Dawkins. At 10 he ordered a cab, and the two genlmn went together.

"Where shall he drive, sir?" says I.

"Oh, tell him to drive to THE BANK."

Pore Dawkins, his eyes red with remors and sleepliss drunkenniss, gave a shudder and a sob, as he sunk back in the wehicle; and they drove on.

That day he sold out every hapny he was worth, xcept five hundred pounds.

* * * * *

Abowt 12 master had returned, and Mr. Dick Blewitt came stridin up the stairs with a sollum and important hair.

"Is your master at home?" says he.

"Yes, sir," says I; and in he walks—I, in coars, with my ear to the keyhole, listning with all my mite.

"Well," says Blewitt, "we maid a pretty good night of it, Mr. Deuceace. Yu've settled, I see, with Dawkins."

"Settled!" says master. "Oh, yes—yes—I've settled with him."

"Four thousand seven hundred, I think?"

"About that—yes."

"That makes my share—let me see—two thousand three hundred and fifty; which I'll thank you to fork out."

"Upon my word—why—Mr. Blewitt," says master, "I don't really understand what you mean."

"*You don't know what I mean!*" says Blewitt, in an axent such as I never before heard—"you don't know what I mean! Did you not promise me that we were to

go shares? Didn't I lend you twenty sovereigns the other night to pay our losings to Dawkins? Didn't you swear, on your honour as a gentleman, to give me half of all that might be won in this affair?"

"Agreed, sir," says Deuceace; "agreed."

"Well, sir, and now what have you to say?"

"Why, *that I don't intend to keep my promise!* You infernal fool and ninny! do you suppose I was labouring for *you?* Do you fancy I was going to the expense of giving a dinner to that jackass yonder, that you should profit by it? Get away, sir! Leave the room, sir! Or, stop—here—I will give you four hundred pounds—your own note of hand, sir, for that sum, if you will consent to forget all that has passed between us, and that you have never known Mr. Algernon Deuceace."

I've seen pipple angery before now, but never any like Blewitt. He stormed, groaned, belloed, swoar! At last he fairly began blubbring—now cussing and nashing his teeth, now praying dear Mr. Deuceace to grant him mercy.

At last master flung open the door (Heavn bless us! it's well I didn't tumble hed over eels into the room), and said, "Charles, show the gentleman downstairs!" My master looked at him quite steddy. Blewitt slunk down, as misrabble as any man I ever see. As for Dawkins, Heaven knows where he was!

* * * * *

"Charles," says my master to me, about an hour afterwards, "I'm going to Paris; you may come, too, if you please."

FORING PARTS.

It was a singular proof of my master's modesty, that though he had won this andsome sum of Mr. Dawkins, and was inclined to be as extravygant and osntatious as any man I ever seed, yet, wen he determined on going to Paris, he didn't let a single frend know of all them winnings of his; didn't acquaint my Lord Crabs, his father, that he was about to leave his natiff shoars—neigh—didn't even so much as

call together his tradesmin, and pay off their little bills befor his departure.

On the contry, "Chawles," said he to me, "stick a piece of paper on my door," which is the way that lawyers do, "and write 'Back at seven' upon it." Back at seven I wrote, and stuck it on our outer oak. And so mistearus was Deuceace about his continental tour (to all except me), that when the landriss brought him her account for the last month (amountain, at the very least, to £2, 10s.), master told her to leave it till Monday morning, when it should be properly settled. It's extrodny how ickonomical a man becomes, when he's got five thousand lbs. in his pockit.

Back at 7 indeed! At 7 we were a-roalin on the Dover Road, in the Reglator Coach—master inside, me out. A strange company of people there was, too, in that wehicle—3 sailors; an Italyin with his music-box and munky; a missionary, going to convert the heathens in France; 2 oppra girls (they call 'em figure-aunts), and the figure-aunts' mothers inside; 4 Frenchmin, with gingybred caps and mustashes, singing, chattering, and jesticklating in the most vonderful vay. Such compliments as passed between them and the figure-aunts! such a munchin of biskits and sippin of brandy! such "O mong Jews," and "O sacrrrés," and "kill fay frwaws!" I didn't understand their languidge at that time, so of course can't igsplain much of their conwersation; but it pleased me, nevertheless, for now I felt that I was reely going into foring parts; which, ever sins I had had any edication at all, was always my fondest wish. Heavin bless us! thought I, if these are specimeens of all Frenchmen, what a set they must be. The pore Italyin's monky, sittin mopin and meluncolly on his box, was not half so ugly, and seamed quite as reasonabble.

Well, we arrived at Dover—"Ship Hotel"—weal cutlets half a ginny, glas of ale a shilling, glas of neagush half-a-crownd, a hapny-worth of wax-lites four shillings, and so on. But master paid without grumbling; as long as it was for himself he never minded the expens: and nex day we embarked in the packit for Balong-sir-mare—which means, in French, the town of Balong sityouated on the sea. I who had heard of foring wonders, expected this to be the fust

and greatest: phansy, then, my disapintment, when we got there, to find this Balong, not situated on the sea, but on the *shoar*.

But oh! the gettin there was the bisniss. How I did wish for Pump Court agin, as we were tawsing abowt in the Channel! Gentle reader, av you ever been on the otion?—"The sea, the sea, the open sea!" as Barry Cromwell says. As soon as we entered our little vessel, and I'd looked to master's luggitch and mine (mine was rapt up in a very small hankercher)—as soon, I say, as we entered our little wessel, as soon as I saw the waives, black and frothy, like fresh-drawn porter, a-dashin against the ribbs of our galliant bark, the keal like a wedge, splittin the billoes in two, the sales a-flaffin in the hair, the standard of Hengland floating at the mask-head, the steward a-getting ready the basins and things, the capting proudly tredding the deck and giving orders to the salers, the white rox of Albany and the bathin-masheens disappearing in the distans—then, then I felt, for the first time, the mite, the madgisty of existence. "Yellowplush, my boy," said I, in a dialogue with myself, "your life is now about to commens—your carear, as a man, dates from your entrans on board this packit. Be wise, be manly, be cautious; forgit the follies of your youth. You are no longer a boy now, but a FOOTMAN. Throw down your tops, your marbles, your boyish games—throw off your childish habbits with your inky clerk's jackit—throw up your——"

* * * * *

Here, I recklect, I was obleeged to stopp. A fealin, in the fust place singlar, in the next place painful, and at last compleatly overpowering, had come upon me while I was making the abuff speach, and now I found myself in a sityouation which Dellixy for Bids me to describe. Suffis to say, that now I dixcovered what basins was made for—that for many, many hours, I lay in a hagony of exostion, dead to all intense and porpuses, the rain pattering in my face, the salers tramplink over my body, the panes of purgatory going on inside. When we'd been about four hours in this sityouation (it seam'd to me four ears), the steward comes to that part of the deck where we servants were all huddled up together, and calls out "Charles!"

"Well," says I, gurgling out a faint "yes; what's the matter?"

"You're wanted."

"Where?"

"Your master's wery ill," says he, with a grin.

"Master be hanged!" says I, turning round, more misrable than ever. I woodn't have moved that day for twenty thousand masters—no, not for the Emproor of Russia or the Pop of Room.

Well, to cut this sad subjik short, many and many a voyitch have I sins had upon what Shakspur calls "the wasty dip," but never such a retched one as that from Dover to Balong, in the year Anna Domino 1818. Steemers were scarce in those days; and our journey was made in a smack. At last, when I was in a stage of despare and exostion, as reely to phansy myself at Death's doar, we got to the end of our journey. Late in the evening we hailed the Gaelic shoars, and hankered in the arbour of Balong-sir-mare.

It was the entrans of Parrowdice to me and master; and as we entered the calm water, and saw the comfrabble lights gleaming in the houses, and felt the roal of the vessel degreasing, never was two mortials gladder, I warrant, than we were. At length our capting drew up at the key, and our journey was down. But such a bustle and clatter, such jabbering, such shrieking and swaring, such wollies of oafs and axicrations as saluted us on landing, I never knew! We were boarded, in the fust place, by custom-house officers in cock-hats, who seased our luggitch, and called for our passpots: then a crowd of inn-waiters came tumbling and screaming on deck—"Dis way, sare," cries one; "Hôtel Meurice," says another; "Hôtel de Bang," screeches another chap—the tower of Babyle was nothink to it. The fust thing that struck me on landing was a big fellow with ear-rings, who very nigh knock me down, in wrenching master's carpet-bag out of my hand, as I was carrying it to the hotell. But we got to it safe at last; and, for the fust time in my life, I slep in a foring country.

I shan't describe this town of Balong, which, as it has been visited by not less (on an avaridg) than two milliums of English since I fust saw it twenty years ago, is tolrabbly well

known already. It's a dingy mellumcolly place, to my mind; the only thing moving in the streets is the gutter which runs down 'em. As for wooden shoes, I saw few of 'em; and for frogs, upon my honour I never see a single Frenchman swallow one, which I had been led to beleave was their reglar, though beastly, custom. One thing which amazed me was the singlar name which they give to this town of Balong. It's divided, as every boddy knows, into an upper town (sitouate on a mounting, and surrounded by a wall, or *bullyvar*) and a lower town, which is on the level of the sea. Well, will it be believed that they call the upper town the *Hot Veal*, and the other the *Base Veal*, which is, on the contry, genrally good in France, though the beaf, it must be confest, is exscrabble.

It was in the Base Veal that Deuceace took his lodgian, at the Hôtel de Bang, in a very crooked street called the Rue del Ascew; and if he'd been the Archbishop of Devonshire, or the Duke of Canterbury, he could not have given himself greater hairs, I can tell you. Nothink was too fine for us now; we had a sweet of rooms on the first floor, which belonged to the prime minister of France (at least the landlord said they were the *premier's*); and the Hon. Algernon Percy Deuceace, who had not paid his landriss, and came to Dover in a coach, seamed now to think that goold was too vulgar for him, and a carridge and six would break down with a man of his weight. Shampang flew about like ginger-pop, besides bordo, clarit, burgundy, burgong, and other wines, and all the delixes of the Balong kitchins. We stopped a fortnit at this dull place, and did nothing from morning till night excep walk on the beach, and watch the ships going in and out of arber, with one of them long, sliding opra-glasses, which they call, I don't know why, tallow-scoops. Our amusements for the fortnit we stopped here were boath numerous and daliteful; nothink, in fact, could be more *pickong*, as they say. In the morning, before breakfast, we boath walked on the Peer; master in a blue mareen jackit, and me in a slap-up new livry; both provided with long sliding opra-glasses, called, as I said (I don't know Y, but I spose it's a scientafick term), tallow-scoops. With these we igsamined very attentively the otion,

the sea-weed, the pebbles, the dead cats, the fishwimmin, and the waives (like little children playing at leap-frog), which came tumbling over 1 and other on to the shoar. It seemed to me as if they were scrambling to get there, as well they might, being sick of the sea, and anxious for the blessid, peaceable *terry firmy*.

After brexfast, down we went again (that is, master on his beat, and me on mine, for my place in this foring town was a complete *shinycure*), and putting our tally-scoops again in our eyes, we egsamined a little more the otion, pebbils, dead cats, and so on; and this lasted till dinner, and dinner till bed-time, and bed-time lasted till nex day, when came brexfast, and dinner, and tally-scooping, as befoar. This is the way with all people of this town, of which, as I've heard say, there is ten thousand happy English, who lead this plesnt life from year's end to year's end.

Besides this, there's billiards and gambling for the gentlemen, a little dancing for the gals, and scandle for the dowygers. In none of these amusements did we partake. We were a *little* too good to play crown pints at cards, and never get paid when we won; or to go dangling after the portionless gals, or amuse ourselves with slops and pennywist along with the old ladies. No, no; my master was a man of forth now, and behayved himself as sich. If ever he condysended to go into the public room of the Hôtel de Bang—the French (doubtless for reasons best known to themselves) call this a sallymanjy—he swoar more and lowder than any one there; he abyoused the waiters, the wittles, the wines. With his glas in his i, he staired at every body. He took always the place before the fire. He talked about "my carridge," "my currier," "my servant;" and he did wright. I've always found through life, that if you wish to be respected by English people, you must be insalent to them, especially if you are a sprig of nobiliaty. We *like* being insulted by noablemen; it shows they're familiar with us. Law bless us! I've known many and many a genlmn about town who'd rather be kicked by a lord than not be noticed by him; they've even had an aw of *me*, because I was a lord's footman. While my master was hectoring in the parlor at Balong, pretious airs I gave myself

in the kitching, I can tell you; and the consequints was, that we were better served, and moar liked, than many pipple with twice our merit.

Deuceace had some particklar plans, no doubt, which kep him so long at Balong; and it clearly was his wish to act the man of fortune there for a little time before he tried the character of Paris. He purchased a carridge, he hired a currier, he rigged me in a fine new livry blazin with lace, and he past through the Balong bank a thousand pounds of the money he had won from Dawkins, to his credit at a Paris house, showing the Balong bankers at the same time that he'd plenty moar in his potfolie. This was killin two birds with one stone; the bankers' clerks spread the nuse over the town, and in a day after master had paid the money every old dowyger in Balong had looked out the Crabs' family podigree in the Peeridge, and was quite intimate with the Deuceace name and estates. If Sattn himself were a lord, I do beleave there's many vurtuous English mothers would be glad to have him for a son-in-law.

Now, though my master had thought fitt to leave town without excommunicating with his father on the subject of his intended continental tripe, as soon as he was settled at Balong he roat my Lord Crabbs a letter, of which I happen to have a copy. It run thus:—

"BOULOGNE, *January* 25.

"MY DEAR FATHER,—I have long, in the course of my legal studies, found the necessity of a knowledge of French, in which language all the early history of our profession is written, and have determined to take a little relaxation from chamber reading, which has seriously injured my health. If my modest finances can bear a two months' journey, and a residence at Paris, I propose to remain there that period.

"Will you have the kindness to send me a letter of introduction to Lord Bobtail, our ambassador? My name, and your old friendship with him, I know, would secure me a reception at his house; but a pressing letter from yourself would at once be more courteous and more effectual.

"May I also ask you for my last quarter's salary? I am not an expensive man, my dear father, as you know; but we

are no chameleons, and fifty pounds (with my little earnings in my profession) would vastly add to the *agrémens* of my continental excursion.

"Present my love to all my brothers and sisters. Ah! how I wish the hard portion of a younger son had not been mine, and that I could live without the dire necessity for labour, happy among the rural scenes of my childhood, and in the society of my dear sisters and you! Heaven bless you, dearest father, and all those beloved ones now dwelling under the dear old roof at Sizes.

"Ever your affectionate son,

"ALGERNON.

"*The Right Hon. the Earl of Crabs, &c.*
"*Sizes Court, Bucks.*"

To this affeckshnat letter his lordship replied, by return of poast, as follos:—

"MY DEAR ALGERNON,—Your letter came safe to hand, and I enclose you the letter for Lord Bobtail, as you desire. He is a kind man, and has one of the best cooks in Europe.

"We were all charmed with your warm remembrances of us, not having seen you for seven years. We cannot but be pleased at the family affection which, in spite of time and absence, still clings so fondly to home. It is a sad, selfish world, and very few who have entered it can afford to keep those fresh feelings which you have, my dear son.

"May you long retain them, is a fond father's earnest prayer. Be sure, dear Algernon, that they will be through life your greatest comfort, as well as your best worldly ally, consoling you in misfortune, cheering you in depression, aiding and inspiring you to exertion and success.

"I am sorry, truly sorry, that my account at Coutts's is so low, just now, as to render a payment of your allowance for the present impossible. I see by my book that I owe you now nine quarters, or £450. Depend on it, my dear boy, that they shall be faithfully paid over to you on the first opportunity.

"By the way, I have enclosed some extracts from the newspapers, which may interest you, and have received a very strange letter from a Mr. Blewitt, about a play trans-

action, which, I suppose, is the case alluded to in these prints. He says you won £4700 from one Dawkins; that the lad paid it; that he, Blewitt, was to go what he calls 'snacks' in the winning; but that you refused to share the booty. How can you, my dear boy, quarrel with these vulgar people, or lay yourself in any way open to their attacks? I have played myself a good deal, and there is no man living who can accuse me of a doubtful act. You should either have shot this Blewitt or paid him. Now, as the matter stands, it is too late to do the former; and, perhaps, it would be Quixotic to perform the latter. My dearest boy! recollect through life that *you never can afford to be dishonest with a rogue.* Four thousand seven hundred pounds was a great *coup*, to be sure.

"As you are now in such high feather, can you, dearest Algernon, lend me five hundred pounds? Upon my soul and honour, I will repay you. Your brothers and sisters send you their love. I need not add that you have always the blessings of your affectionate father, CRABS.

"P.S.—Make it 500, and I will give you my note-of-hand for a thousand."

* * * * *

I neednt say that this did not *quite* enter into Deuceace's eyedears. Lend his father 500 pound, indeed! He'd as soon have lent him a box on the year! In the fust place, he hadn seen old Crabs for seven years, as that nobleman remarked in his epistol; in the secknd he hated him, and they hated each other; and nex, if master had loved his father ever so much, he loved somebody else better—his father's son, namely: and sooner than deprive that exlent young man of a penny, he'd have sean all the fathers in the world hangin at Newgat, and all the "beloved ones," as he called his sisters, the Lady Deuceacisses, so many convix at Bottomy Bay.

The newspaper parrografs showed that, however secret *we* wished to keep the play transaction, the public knew it now full well. Blewitt, as I found after, was the author of the libels which appeared right and left:—

"GAMBLING IN HIGH LIFE:—The *Honourable* Mr. De-c-ce

again!—This celebrated whist-player has turned his accomplishments to some profit. On Friday, the 16th January, he won five thousand pounds from a *very* young gentleman, Th-m-s Sm-th D-wk-ns, Esq., and lost two thousand five hundred to R. Bl-w-tt, Esq., of the T-mple. Mr. D. very honourably paid the sum lost by him to the honourable whist-player, but we have not heard that, *before his sudden trip to Paris*, Mr. D-uc-ce paid *his* losings to Mr. Bl-w-tt."

Nex came a "Notice to Corryspondents":—

"Fair Play asks us, if we know of the gambling doings of the notorious Deuceace? We answer, WE DO; and, in our very next Number, propose to make some of them public."

* * * * *

They didn't appear, however; but, on the contry, the very same newspeper, which had been before so abusiff of Deuceace, was now loud in his praise. It said:—

"A paragraph was inadvertently admitted into our paper of last week, most unjustly assailing the character of a gentleman of high birth and talents, the son of the exemplary E-rl of Cr-bs. We repel, with scorn and indignation, the dastardly falsehoods of the malignant slanderer who vilified Mr. De-ce-ce, and beg to offer that gentleman the only reparation in our power for having thus tampered with his unsullied name. We disbelieve the *ruffian* and *his story*, and most sincerely regret that such a tale, or *such a writer*, should ever have been brought forward to the readers of this paper."

This was satisfactory, and no mistake; and much pleased we were at the denial of this conshentious editor. So much pleased that master sent him a ten-pound noat, and his complymints. He'd sent another to the same address, *before* this parrowgraff was printed; *why*, I can't think, for I woodn't suppose any thing musnary in a littery man.

Well, after this bisniss was concluded, the currier hired, the carridge smartened a little, and me set up in my new livries, we bade ojew to Bulong in the grandest state posbill. What a figure we cut! and, my i, what a figger the postillion cut! A cock-hat, a jackit made out of a cow's skin (it was

in cold weather), a pig-tale about 3 fit in length, and a pair of boots! Oh, sich a pare! A bishop might almost have preached out of one, or a modrat-sized famly slep in it. Me and Mr. Schwigshhnaps, the currier, sate behind in the rumbill; master aloan in the inside, as grand as a Turk, and rapt up in his fine fir-cloak. Off we sett, bowing gracefly to the crowd; the harniss-bells jinglin, the great white hosses snortin, kickin, and squeelin, and the postilium cracking his wip, as loud as if he'd been drivin her majesty the quean.

* * * * *

Well, I shant describe our voyitch. We passed sefral sitties, willitches, and metrappolishes; sleeping the fust night at Amiens, witch, as everyboddy knows, is famous ever since the year 1802 for what's called the Pease of Amiens. We had some, very good, done with sugar and brown sos, in the Amiens way. But after all the boasting about them, I think I like our marrowphats better.

Speaking of wedgytables, another singler axdent happened here concarning them. Master, who was brexfasting before going away, told me to go and get him his fur travling-shoes. I went and toald the waiter of the inn, who stared, grinned (as these chaps always do), said "*Bong*" (which means, very well), and presently came back.

I'm blest if he didn't bring master a plate of cabbitch! Would you bleave it, that now, in the nineteenth sentry, when they say there's schoolmasters abroad, these stewpid French jackasses are so extonishingly ignorant as to call a *cabbidge* a *shoo!* Never, never let it be said, after this, that these benighted, souperstitious, misrabble *savidges* are equill, in any respex, to the great Brittish people. The moor I travvle, the moor I see of the world, and other natiums, I am proud of my own, and despise and deplore the retchid ignorance of the rest of Yourup.

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My remarks on Parris you shall have by an early opportunity. Me and Deuceace played some curious pranx there, I can tell you.

MR. DEUCEACE AT PARIS.

CHAPTER I.

THE TWO BUNDLES OF HAY.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR GEORGE GRIFFIN, K.C.B., was about seventy-five years old when he left this life, and the East Ingine army, of which he was a distinguished ornyment. Sir George's first appearance in Injar was in the character of a cabbing-boy to a vessel, from which he rose to be clerk to the owners at Calcutta, from which he became all of a sudden a capting in the Company's service; and so rose and rose, until he rose to be a leftenant-general, when he stopped rising altogether—hopping the twig of this life, as drummers, generals, dustmen, and emperors must do.

Sir George did not leave any mal hair to perpetuate the name of Griffin. A widow of about twenty-seven, and a daughter avaritching twenty-three, was left behind to deploar his loss and share his proppaty. On old Sir George's deth, his intresting widdo and orfan, who had both been with him in Injer, returned home; tried London for a few months, did not like it, and resolved on a trip to Paris, where very small London people become very great ones, if they've money, as these Griffinses had. The intelligent reader need not be told that Miss Griffin was not the daughter of Lady Griffin; for though marritches are made tolrabbly early in Injer, people are not quite so precoashoos as all that; the fact is, Lady G. was Sir George's second wife. I need scarcely add that Miss Matilda Griffin wos the offspring of his fust marritch.

Miss Leonora Kicksey, a ansum, lively Islington gal, taken out to Calcutta, and, amongst his other goods, very comfortably disposed of by her uncle, Capting Kicksey, was one-and-twenty when she married Sir George at seventy-one; and the 13 Miss Kickseys, nine of whom kep a school at Islington (the other 4 being married variously in the city), were not a little envius of my lady's luck, and not a little proud of their relationship to her. One of 'em, Miss Jemima Kicksey, the oldest, and by no means the least ugly of the sett, was staying with her ladyship, and gev me all the par-

tecklars. Of the rest of the famly, being of a lo sort, I in course no nothink; *my* acquaintance, thank my stars, don't lie among them, or the likes of them.

Well, this Miss Jemima lived with her younger and more fortnat sister, in the qualaty of companion, or toddy. Poar thing! I'd a soon be a gally slave as lead the life she did! Every body in the house despised her; her ladyship insulted her; the very kitching gals scorned and flouted her. She roat the notes, she kep the bills, she made the tea, she whipped the chocklate, she cleaned the canary birds, and gev out the linning for the wash. She was my lady's walking pocket, or rettycule; and fetched and carried her handkercher, or her smell-bottle, like a well-bred spaniel. All night, at her ladyship's swarries, she thumped kidrills (nobody ever thought of asking *her* to dance!); when Miss Griffing sung, she played the piano, and was scolded because the singer was out of tune; abommanating dogs, she never drove out without her ladyship's puddle in her lap; and, reglarly unwell in a carriage, she never got any thing but the back seat. Poar Jemima! I can see her now in my lady's *secknd-best* old clothes (the ladies'-maids always got the prime leavings): a liloc sattn gown, crumpled, blotched, and greasy; a pair of white sattn shoes, of the colour of Inger rubber; a faded yellow velvet hat, with a wreath of hartifishl flowers run to sead, and a bird of Parrowdice perched on the top of it, melumcolly and moulting, with only a couple of feathers left in his unfortunate tail.

Besides this ornyment to their saloon, Lady and Miss Griffin kept a number of other servants in the kitching; 2 ladies'-maids; 2 footmin, six feet high each, crimson coats, goold knots, and white cassymear pantyloons; a coachmin to match; a page; and a Shassure—a kind of servant only known among forriners, and who looks more like a major-general than any other mortial, wearing a cock-hat, a unicorn covered with silver lace, mustashos, eplets, and a sword by his side. All these to wait upon two ladies—not counting a host of the fair six, such as cooks, scullion, housekeepers, and so forth.

My Lady Griffin's lodging was at forty pound a week, in a grand sweet of rooms in the Plas Vandome at Paris. And,

having thus described their house, and their servants' hall, I may give a few words of description concerning the ladies themselves.

In the fust place, and in coarse, they hated each other. My lady was twenty-seven—a widdo of two years—fat, fair, and rosy. A slow, quiet, cold-looking woman, as those fair-haired gals generally are, it seemed difficult to rouse her either into likes or dislikes—to the former, at least. She never loved any body but *one*, and that was herself. She hated, in her calm, quiet way, almost every one else who came near her—every one, from her neighbour the duke, who had slighted her at dinner, down to John the footman, who had torn a hole in her train. I think this woman's heart was like one of them lithograffic stones—you *can't rub out any thing* when once it's drawn or wrote on it; nor could you out of her ladyship's stone—heart, I mean—in the shape of an affront, a slight, or real or phansied injury. She boar an exlent, irreprotchable character, against which the tongue of scandal never wagged. She was allowed to be the best wife posbill, and so she was; but she killed her old husband in two years as dead as ever Mr. Thurtell killed Mr. William Weare. She never got into a passion, not she—she never said a rude word; but she'd a genius—a genius which many women have—of making *a hell* of a house, and tort'ring the poor creatures of her family, until they were wellnigh drove mad.

Miss Matilda Griffin was a good deal uglier, and about as amiable as her mother-in-law. She was crooked, and squinted; my lady, to do her justice, was straight, and looked the same way with her i's. She was dark, and my lady was fair—sentimental, as her ladyship was cold. My lady was never in a passion—Miss Matilda always; and awfille were the scenes which used to pass between these 2 women, and the wickid, wickid quarls which took place. Why did they live together? There was the mistry. Not related, and hating each other like pison, it would surely have been easier to remain seprat, and so have detested each other at a distans.

As for the fortune which old Sir George had left, that, it was clear, was very considrabble—300 thowsnd lb. at the least,

as I have heard say. But nobody knew how it was disposed of. Some said that her ladyship was sole mistriss of it, others that it was divided, others that she had only a life inkum, and that the money was all to go (as was natral) to Miss Matilda. These are subjix which are not praps very interesting to the British public, but were mighty important to my master, the Honrable Algernon Percy Deuceace, esquire, barrister-at-law, etsettler, etsettler.

For I've forgot to inform you that my master was very intimat in this house; and that we were now comfortably settled at the Hotel Mirabew (pronounced Marobo in French), in the Rew delly Pay, at Paris. We had our cab, and two riding horses; our banker's book, and a thousand pound for a balants at Lafitt's; our club at the corner of the Rew Gramong; our share in a box at the oppras; our apartments, spacious and elygant; our swarries at court; our dinners at his excellency Lord Bobtail's and elsewhere. Thanks to poar Dawkins's five thousand pound, we were as complete gentlemen as any in Paris.

Now my master, like a wise man as he was, seaing himself at the head of a smart sum of money, and in a country where his debts could not bother him, determined to give up for the present every think like gambling—at least, high play; as for losing or winning a ralow of Napoleums at whist or ecarty, it did not matter: it looks like money to do such things, and gives a kind of respectabilaty. "But, as for play, he wouldn't—oh no! not for worlds!—do such a thing." He *had* played, like other young men of fashn, and won and lost [old fox! he didn't say he had *paid*]; but he had given up the amusement, and was now determined, he said, to live on his inkum. The fact is, my master was doing his very best to act the respectable man, and a very good game it is, too; but it requires a precious great roag to play it.

He made his appearans reglar at church—me carrying a handsome large black marocky Prayer-book and Bible, with the psalms and lessons marked out with red ribbings; and you'd have thought, as I graivly laid the volloms down before him, and as he berried his head in his nicely brushed hat, before service began, that such a pious, proper, morl, young nobleman was not to be found in the whole of the peeridge.

It was a comfort to look at him. Efry old tabby and dowyger at my Lord Bobtail's turned up the wights of their i's when they spoke of him, and vowed they had never seen such a dear, daliteful, exlent young man. What a good son he must be, they said; and oh, what a good son-in-law! He had the pick of all the English gals at Paris before we had been there 3 months. But, unfortunately, most of them were poar; and love and a cottidge was not quite in master's way of thinking.

Well, about this time my Lady Griffin and Miss G. made their appearants at Parris, and master, who was up to snough, very soon changed his noat. He sate near them at chapple, and sung hims with my lady; he danced with 'em at the embassy balls; he road with them in the Boy de Balong and the Shandeleasies (which is the French High Park); he roat potry in Miss Griffin's halbim, and sang jewets along with her and Lady Griffin; he brought sweat-meats for the puddle-dog; he gave money to the footmin, kissis and gloves to the sniggering ladies'-maids; he was sivvle even to poar Miss Kicksey; there wasn't a single soal at the Griffinses that didn't adoar this good young man.

The ladies, if they hated befoar, you may be sure detested each other now wuss than ever. There had been always a jallowsy between them; miss jellows of her mother-in-law's bewty; madam of miss's espree: miss taunting my lady about the school at Islington, and my lady snearing at miss for her squint and her crookid back. And now came a stronger caws. They both fell in love with Mr. Deuceace—my lady, that is to say, as much as she could, with her cold selfish temper. She liked Deuceace, who amused her and made her laff. She liked his manners, his riding, and his good loox; and being a *pervinew* herself, had a dubble respect for real aristocratick flesh and blood. Miss's love, on the contry, was all flams and fury. She'd always been at this work from the time she had been at school, where she very nigh run away with a Frentch master; next with a footman (which I may say, in confidence, is by no means unnatral or unusyouall, as I *could show if I liked*); and so had been going on sins fifteen. She reglarly flung herself at Deuceace's head—such sighing, crying, and ogling I never

see. Often was I ready to bust out laffin, as I brought master skoars of rose-coloured *billydoos*, folded up like cockhats, and smellin like barber's shops, which this very tender young lady used to address to him. Now, though master was a scoundrill and no mistake, he was a gentlemin, and a man of good breading; and miss *came a little too strong* (pardon the wulgarity of the xpression) with her hardor and attachmint, for one of his taste. Besides, she had a crookid spine, and a squint; so that (supposing their fortns tolrabbly equal) Deuceace reely preferred the mother-in-law.

Now, then, it was his bisniss to find out which had the most money. With an English famly this would have been easy: a look at a will at Doctor Commons'es would settle the matter at once. But this India naybob's will was at Calcutty, or some outlandish place; and there was no getting sight of a coppy of it. I will do Mr. Algernon Deuceace the justass to say, that he was so little musnary in his love for Lady Griffin, that he would have married her gladly, even if she had ten thousand pounds less than Miss Matilda. In the meantime, his plan was to keep 'em both in play, until he could strike the best fish of the two—not a difficult matter for a man of his genus; besides, Miss was hooked for certain.

CHAPTER II.

"HONOUR THY FATHER."

I SAID that my master was adoared by every person in my Lady Griffin's establishmint. I should have said by every person excep one—a young French gnlmn, that is, who, before our appearants, had been mighty partiklar with my lady, ockupying by her side exackly the same pasition which the Honrable Mr. Deuceace now held. It was bewtiffle and headifying to see how coolly that young nobleman kicked the poar Shevalliay de L'Orge out of his shoes, and how gracefully he himself stept into 'em. Munseer de L'Orge was a smart young French jentleman, of about my master's age and good looks, but not possest of half my master's impidince. Not that that quallaty is uncommon in France;

but few, very few, had it to such a degree as my exlent employer, Mr. Deuceace. Besides, De L'Orge was reglarly and reely in love with Lady Griffin, and master only pretending: he had, of coars, an advantitch which the poar Frentchman never could git. He was all smiles and gaty, while Delorge was ockward and melumcolly. My master had said twenty pretty things to Lady Griffin befor the shevalier had finished smoothing his hat, staring at her, and sighing fit to bust his weskit. O luv, luv! *This* isn't the way to win a woman, or my name's not Fitzroy Yellowplush! Myself, when I begun my carear among the fair six, I was always sighing and moping, like this poar Frenchman. What was the consquints? The foar fust women I adoared lafft at me, and left me for something more lively. With the rest I have edopted a diffrent game, and with tolrable suxess, I can tell you. But this is eggatism, which I aboar.

Well, the long and the short of it is, that Munseer Ferdinand Hyppolite Xavier Stanislas, Shevalier de L'Orge, was reglar cut out by Munseer Algernon Percy Deuceace, Exquire. Poar Ferdinand did not leave the house—he hadn't the heart to do that—nor had my lady the desire to dismiss him. He was usefle in a thousand different ways, gitting oppra-boxes, and invitations to French swarries, bying gloves and O de Colong, writing French noats, and such like. Always let me recommend an English famly, going to Paris, to have at least one young man of the sort about them. Never mind how old your ladyship is, he will make love to you; never mind what errints you send him upon, he'll trot off and do them. Besides, he's always quite and well-dresst, and never drinx moar than a pint of wine at dinner, which (as I say) is a pint to consider. Such a conveniants of a man was Munseer de L'Orge—the greatest use and comfort to my lady posbill; if it was but to laff at his bad pronunciatium of English, it was somethink amusink; the fun was to pit him against poar Miss Kicksey, she speakin French, and he our naytif British tong.

My master, to do him justice, was perfickly sivvle to this poar young Frenchman; and having kicked him out of the place which he occupied, sertingly treated his fallen anymy with every respect and consideration. Poar modist down-

hearted little Ferdinand adoared my lady as a goddice; and so he was very polite, likewise, to my master—never ventring once to be jellows of him, or to question my Lady Griffin's right to change her lover, if she choase to do so.

Thus, then, matters stood: master had two strinx to his bo, and might take either the widdo or the orfn, as he preferred—*com bong lwee somblay*, as the Frentch say. His only pint was to discover how the money was disposed off, which evidently belonged to one or other, or boath. At any rate he was sure of one; as sure as any mortial man can be in this sublimary spear, where nothink is suttn except unsertnty.

* * * * *

A very unixpected insdint here took place, which in a good deal changed my master's calkylations.

One night, after conducting the two ladies to the oppra, after suppink of white soop, sammy-deperdrow, and shampang glassy (which means, eyced), at their house in the Plas Vandom, me and master droav hoam in the cab, as happy as possbill.

"Chawls, you d——d scoundrel," says he to me (for he was in an exlent humer), "when I'm married I'll dubbil your wagis."

This he might do, to be sure, without injaring himself, seing that he had as yet never paid me any. But, what then? Law bless us! things would be at a pretty pass if we suvvants only lived on our *wagis*; our puckwisits is the thing, and no mistake.

I ixprest my gratatude as best I could—swoar that it wasn't for wagis I served him; that I would as leaf weight upon him for nothink; and that never, never, so long as I livd, would I, of my own accord, part from such an exlent master. By the time these two spitches had been made—my spitch and his—we arrived at the "Hotel Mirabeu," which, as every body knows, ain't very distant from the Plas Vandome. Up we marched to our apartmince, me carrying the light and the cloax, master hummink a hair out of the oppra, as merry as a lark.

I opened the door of our salong. There was lights already in the room; an empty shampang bottle roaling on the floar, another on the table; near which the sofy was drawn, and

on it lay a stout old genlmn, smoaking seagars as if he'd bean in an inn tap-room.

Deuceace (who abommanates seagars, as I've already shown) bust into a furious raige against the genlmn, whom he could hardly see for the smoak; and, with a number of oaves quite unnecessary to repeat, asked him what bisniss he'd there.

The smoaking chap rose, and, laying down his seagar, began a ror of laffin, and said, "What! Algy my boy! don't you know me?"

The reader may praps recklect a very affecting letter which was published in the last chapter of these memoars; in which the writer requested a loan of five hundred pound from Mr. Algernon Deuceace, and which boar the respected signatur of the Earl of Crabs, Mr. Deuceace's own father. It was that distinguished arastycrat who was now smokin and laffin in our room.

My Lord Crabs was, as I preshumed, about 60 years old. A stowt, burly, red-faced, bald-headed nobleman, whose nose seemed blushing at what his mouth was continually swallowing; whose hand, praps, trembled a little; and whose thy and legg was not quite so full or as steddy as they had been in former days. But he was a respecktabble, fine-looking old nobleman; and though it must be confest ½ drunk when we fust made our appearance in the salong, yet by no means moor so than a reel noblemin ought to be.

"What, Algy my boy!" shouts out his lordship, advancing and seasing master by the hand, "doan't you know your own father?"

Master seemed anythink but overhappy. "My lord," says he, looking very pail, and speakin rayther slow, "I didn't—I confess—the unexpected pleasure—of seeing you in Paris. The fact is, sir," said he, recovering himself a little—"the fact is, there was such a confounded smoke of tobacco in the room, that I really could not see who the stranger was who had paid me such an unexpected visit."

"A bad habit, Algernon—a bad habit," said my lord, lighting another seagar; "a disgusting and filthy practice, which you, my dear child, will do well to avoid. It is at best, dear Algernon, but a nasty, idle pastime, unfitting a

man as well for mental exertion as for respectable society; sacrificing at once the vigour of the intellect and the graces of the person. By-the-bye, what infernal bad tobacco they have, too, in this hotel! Could not you send your servant to get me a few seagars at the Café de Paris? Give him a five-franc piece, and let him go at once, that's a good fellow."

Here his lordship hiccupt, and drank off a fresh tumbler of shampang. Very sulkily, master drew out the coin, and sent me on the errint.

Knowing the Café de Paris to be shut at that hour, I didn't say a word, but quietly establisht myself in the anteroom, where, as it happened by a singler coinstdints, I could hear every word of the conversation between this exlent pair of relatifs.

"Help yourself, and get another bottle," says my lord, after a sollum paws. My poar master, the king of all other compnies in which he moved, seamed here but to play secknd fiddill, and went to the cubbard, from which his father had already igstracted two bottils of his prime Sillary.

He put it down before his father, coft, spit, opened the windows, stirred the fire, yawned, clapt his hand to his forehead, and suttnly seamed as uneezy as a genlmn could be. But it was of no use; the old one would not budg. "Help yourself," says he again, "and pass me the bottil."

"You are very good, father," says master; "but really, I neither drink nor smoke."

"Right, my boy, quite right. Talk about a good conscience in this life! a good *stomack* is everythink. No bad nights, no headachs—eh? Quite cool and collected for your law studies in the morning—eh?" And the old nobleman here grinned, in a manner which would have done creddit to Mr. Grimoldi.

Master sate pale and wincing, as I've seen a pore soldier under the cat. He didn't anser a word. His exlent pa went on, warming as he continued to speak, and drinking a fresh glas at evry full stop.

"How you must improve, with such talents and such principles! Why, Algernon, all London talks of your industry and perseverance: you're not merely a philosopher, man;

hang it! you've got the philosopher's stone. Fine rooms, fine horses, champagne, and all for 200 a year!"

"I presume, sir," says my master, "that you mean the two hundred a year which *you* pay me?"

"The very sum, my boy; the very sum!" cries my lord, laffin as if he would die. "Why, that's the wonder! I never pay the two hundred a year, and you keep all this state up upon nothing. Give me your secret, O you young Trismegistus! Tell your old father how such wonders can be worked, and I will—yes, then, upon my word, I will—pay you your two hundred a year!"

"*Enfin*, my lord," says Mr. Deuceace, starting up, and losing all patience, "will you have the goodness to tell me what this visit means? You leave me to starve, for all you care; and you grow mighty facetious because I earn my bread. You find me in prosperity, and——"

"Precisely, my boy, precisely. Keep your temper, and pass that bottle. I find you in prosperity; and a young gentleman of your genius and acquirements asks me why I seek your society? O Algernon, Algernon! this is not worthy of such a profound philosopher. *Why* do I seek you? Why, because you *are* in prosperity, O my son! else why the devil should I bother myself about you? Did I, your poor mother, or your family, ever get from you a single affectionate feeling? Did we, or any other of your friends or intimates, ever know you to be guilty of a single honest or generous action? Did we ever pretend any love for you, or you for us? Algernon Deuceace, you don't want a father to tell you that you are a swindler and a spendthrift! I have paid thousands for the debts of yourself and your brothers; and if you pay nobody else, I am determined you shall repay me. You would not do it by fair means, when I wrote to you and asked you for a loan of money. I knew you would not. Had I written again to warn you of my coming, you would have given me the slip; and so I came, uninvited, to *force* you to repay me. *That's* why I am here, Mr. Algernon; and so help yourself and pass the bottle."

After this speach, the old genlmn sunk down on the sofa, and puffed as much smoke out of his mouth as if he'd been the chimley of a steam-injian. I was pleased, I confess,

with the sean, and liked to see this venrabble and virtuous old man a-nocking his son about the hed; just as Deuceace had done with Mr. Richard Blewitt, as I've before shown. Master's face was fust red-hot, next chawk-white, and then sky-blew. He looked, for all the world, like Mr. Tippy Cooke in the tragady of *Frankinstang*. At last he mannidged to speek.

"My lord," says he, "I expected when I saw you that some such scheme was on foot. Swindler and spendthrift as I am, at least it is but a family failing; and I am indebted for my virtues to my father's precious example. Your lordship has, I perceive, added drunkenness to the list of your accomplishments; and, I suppose, under the influence of that gentlemanly excitement, has come to make these preposterous propositions to me. When you are sober, you will, perhaps, be wise enough to know that, fool as I may be, I am not such a fool as you think me; and that if I have got money, I intend to keep it—every farthing of it—though you were to be ten times as drunk, and ten times as threatening, as you are now."

"Well, well, my boy," said Lord Crabs, who seemed to have been half asleep during his son's oratium, and received all his sneers and surcasms with the most complete good-humour—"well, well, if you will resist, *tant pis pour toi* I've no desire to ruin you, recollect, and am not in the slightest degree angry; but I must and will have a thousand pounds. You had better give me the money at once; it will cost you more if you don't."

"Sir," says Mr. Deuceace, "I will be equally candid. I would not give you a farthing to save you from ——"

Here I thought proper to open the doar, and, touching my hat, said, "I have been to the Café de Paris, my lord, but the house is shut."

"*Bon:* there's a good lad; you may keep the five francs. And now, get me a candle and show me downstairs."

But my master seized the wax taper. "Pardon me, my lord," says he. "What! a servant do it, when your son is in the room? Ah, *par exemple*, my dear father," said he, laughing, "you think there is no politeness left among us." And he led the way out.

"Good-night, my dear boy," said Lord Crabs.

"God bless you, sir," says he. "Are you wrapped warm? Mind the step!"

And so this affeckshnate pair parted.

CHAPTER III.

MINEWVRING.

MASTER rose the nex morning with a dismal countinants; he seamed to think that his pa's visit boded him no good. I heard him muttering at his brexfast, and fumbling among his hundred pound notes; once he had laid a parsle of them aside (I knew what he meant), to send 'em to his father. "But no," says he at last, clutching them all up together again, and throwing them into his escritaw, "what harm can he do me? If he is a knave, I know another who's full as sharp. Let's see if we cannot beat him at his own weapons." With that Mr. Deuceace drest himself in his best clothes, and marched off to the Plas Vandom, to pay his cort to the fair widdo and the intresting orfn.

It was abowt ten o'clock, and he propoased to the ladies, on seeing them, a number of planns for the day's rackryation. Riding in the Body Balong, going to the Twillaries to see King Looy Disweet (who was then the raining sufferin of the French crownd) go to chapple, and, finely, a dinner at 5 o'clock at the Caffy de Parry; whents they were all to adjourn, to see a new peace at the theatre of the Pot St. Martin, called *Susannar and the Elders*.

The gals agread to everythink, exsep the two last prepositiums. "We have an engagement, my dear Mr. Algernon," said my lady. "Look—a very kind letter from Lady Bobtail." And she handed over a pafewmd noat from that exolted lady. It ran thus:—

"FBG. ST. HONORÉ, *Thursday, Feb.* 15, 1817.

"MY DEAR LADY GRIFFIN,—It is an age since we met. Harassing public duties occupy so much myself and Lord Bobtail, that we have scarce time to see our private friends;

among whom I hope my dear Lady Griffin will allow me to rank her. Will you excuse so very unceremonious an invitation, and dine with us at the embassy to-day? We shall be *en petit comité*, and shall have the pleasure of hearing, I hope, some of your charming daughter's singing in the evening. I ought, perhaps, to have addressed a separate note to dear Miss Griffin; but I hope she will pardon a poor *diplomate*, who has so many letters to write, you know.

"Farewell till seven, when I *positively must* see you both. —Ever, dearest Lady Griffin, your affectionate

"ELIZA BOBTAIL."

Such a letter from the ambassdriss, brot by the ambasdor's Shassure, and sealed with his seal of arms, would affect anybody in the middling ranx of life. It droav Lady Griffin mad with delight; and long before my master's arrivle, she'd sent Mortimer and Fitzclarence, her two footmin, along with a polite reply in the affummatiff.

Master read the noat with no such fealinx of joy. He felt that there was somethink a-going on behind the seans, and, though he could not tell how, was sure that some danger was near him. That old fox of a father of his had begun his M'Inations pretty early!

Deuceace handed back the letter; sneared, and poohd, and hinted that such an invitation was an insult at best (what he called a *pees ally*); and, the ladies might depend upon it, was only sent because Lady Bobtail wanted to fill up two spare places at her table. But Lady Griffin and Miss would not have his insinwations; they knew too fu lords ever to refuse an invitatium from any one of them. Go they would, and poor Deuceace must dine alone. After they had been on their ride, and had had their other amusemince, master came back with them, chatted, and laft; he was mighty sarkastix with my lady; tender and sentrymentle with Miss; and left them both in high sperrits to perform their twollet, before dinner.

As I came to the door (for I was as famillyer as a servnt of the house), as I came into the drawing-room to announts his cab, I saw master very quietly taking his pocket-book (or *pot fool*, as the French call it) and thrusting it under one of the cushinx of the sofa. What game is this? thinx I.

Why, this was the game. In abowt two hours, when he knew the ladies were gon, he pretends to be vastly anxious abowt the loss of his potfolio, and back he goes to Lady Griffinses to seek for it there.

"Pray," says he, on going in, "ask Miss Kicksey if I may see her for a single moment." And down comes Miss Kicksey, quite smiling, and happy to see him.

"Law, Mr. Deuceace!" says she, trying to blush as hard as ever she could, "you quite surprise me! I don't know whether I ought really, being alone, to admit a gentleman."

"Nay, don't say so, dear Miss Kicksey! for do you know, I came here for a double purpose—to ask about a pocket-book which I have lost, and may, perhaps, have left here; and then, to ask you if you will have the great goodness to pity a solitary bachelor, and give him a cup of your nice tea?"

Nice tea! I thot I should have split; for I'm blest if master had eaten a morsle of dinner!

Never mind; down to tea they sate. "Do you take cream and sugar, dear sir?" says poar Kicksey, with a voice as tender as a tuttle-duff.

"Both, dearest Miss Kicksey!" answers master, and stowed in a power of sashong and muffinx which would have done honour to a washawoman.

I shan't describe the conversation that took place betwigst master and this young lady. The reader, praps, knows y Deuceace took the trouble to talk to her for an hour, and to swallow all her tea. He wanted to find out from her all she knew about the famly money matters, and settle at once which of the two Griffinses he should marry.

The poar thing, of cors, was no match for such a man as my master. In a quarter of an hour he had, if I may use the igspression, "turned her inside out." He knew everything that she knew; and that, poar creature, was very little. There was nine thousand a year, she had heard say, in money, in houses, in banks in Injar, and what not. Boath the ladies signed papers for selling or buying, and the money seemed equilly divided betwigst them.

Nine thousand a year! Deuceace went away, his cheex tingling, his heart beating. He, without a penny, could nex morning, if he liked, be master of five thousand per hannum!

Yes. But how? Which had the money—the mother or the daughter? All the tea-drinking had not taught him this piece of nollidge; and Deuceace thought it a pity that he could not marry both.

* * * * *

The ladies came back at night, mightaly pleased with their reception at the ambasdor's; and, stepping out of their carridge, bid coachmin drive on with a gentlemin who had handed them out—a stout old gentlemin, who shook hands most tenderly at parting, and promised to call often upon my Lady Griffin. He was so polite that he wanted to mount the stairs with her ladyship; but no, she would not suffer it. "Edward," says she to the coachmin, quite loud, and pleased that all the people in the hotel should hear her, "you will take the carriage, and drive *his lordship* home." Now, can you guess who his lordship was? The Right Hon. the Earl of Crabs, to be sure; the very old genlmn whom I had seen on such charming terms with his son the day before. Master knew this the nex day, and began to think he had been a fool to deny his pa the thousand pound.

Now, though the suckmstansies of the dinner at the ambasdor's only came to my years some time after, I may as well relate 'em here, word for word, as they was told me by the very genlmn who waited behind Lord Crabseses chair.

There was only a "*petty comity*" at dinner, as Lady Bobtail said; and my Lord Crabs was placed betwigst the two Griffinses, being mighty ellygant and palite to both. "Allow me," says he to Lady G. (between the soop and the fish), "my dear madam, to thank you—fervently thank you for your goodness to my poor boy. Your ladyship is too young to experience, but, I am sure, far too tender not to understand, the gratitude which must fill a fond parent's heart for kindness shown to his child. Believe me," says my lord, looking her full and tenderly in the face, "that the favours you have done to another have been done equally to myself, and awaken in my bosom the same grateful and affectionate feelings with which you have already inspired my son Algernon."

Lady Griffin blusht, and droopt her head till her ringlets fell into her fish-plate; and she swallowed Lord Crabs's flumry

just as she would so many musharuins. My lord (whose powers of slack-jaw was notoarious) nex addrast another spitch to Miss Griffin. He said he'd heard how Deuceace was *situated*. Miss blusht—what a happy dog he was—Miss blusht crimson, and then he sighed deeply, and began eating his turbat and lobster sos. Master was a good un at flumry, but, law bless you! he was no moar equill to the old man than a molehill is to a mounting. Before the night was over, he had made as much progress as another man would in a ear. One almost forgot his red nose and his big stomick, and his wicked, leering i's, in his gentle, insiniwating woice, his fund of annygoats, and, above all, the bewtifle morl, religious, and honrabble toan of his genral conversation. Praps you will say that these ladies were, for such rich pipple, mightily esaly captivated; but recklect, my dear sir, that they were fresh from Injar,—that they'd not sean many lords,—that they adoared the peeridge, as every honest woman does in England who has proper feelinx, and has read the fashnabble novvles,—and that here at Paris was their fust step into fashnabble sosiaty.

Well, after dinner, while Miss Matilda was singing "*Die tantie*," or "*Dip your chair*," or some of them sellabrated Italyian hairs (when she began this squall, hang me if she'd ever stop), my lord gets hold of Lady Griffin again, and gradgaly begins to talk to her in a very different strane.

"What a blessing it is for us all," says he, "that Algernon has found a friend so respectable as your ladyship!"

"Indeed, my lord; and why? I suppose I am not the only respectable friend that Mr. Deuceace has?"

"No, surely; not the only one he *has had*: his birth, and, permit me to say, his relationship to myself, have procured him many. But—" (here my lord heaved a very affecting and large sigh).

"But what?" says my lady, laffing at the igspression of his dismal face. "You don't mean that Mr. Deuceace has lost them or is unworthy of them?"

"I trust not, my dear madam, I trust not; but he is wild, thoughtless, extravagant, and embarrassed: and you know a man under these circumstances is not very particular as to his associates."

"Embarrassed? Good heavens! He says he has two thousand a year left him by a godmother; and he does not seem even to spend his income—a very handsome independence, too, for a bachelor."

My lord nodded his head sadly, and said, "Will your ladyship give me your word of honour to be secret? My son has but a thousand a year, which I allow him, and is heavily in debt. He has played, madam, I fear; and for this reason I am so glad to hear that he is in a respectable domestic circle, where he may learn, in the presence of far greater and purer attractions, to forget the dice-box, and the low company which has been his bane."

My Lady Griffin looked very grave indeed. Was it true? Was Deuceace sincere in his professions of love, or was he only a sharper wooing her for her money? Could she doubt her informer—his own father, and, what's more, a real flesh-and-blood pear of parlyment? She determined she would try him. Praps she did not know she had liked Deuceace so much, until she kem to feel how much she should *hate* him if she found he'd been playing her false.

The evening was over, and back they came, as wee've seen—my lord driving home in my lady's carridge, her ladyship and Miss walking upstairs to their own apartmince.

Here, for a wonder, was poar Miss Kicksey quite happy and smiling, and evidently full of a secret—something mighty pleasant, to judge from her loox. She did not long keep it. As she was making tea for the ladies (for in that house they took a cup regular before bed-time), "Well, my lady," says she, "who do you think has been to drink tea with me?" Poar thing, a frendly face was an event in her life—a tea-party quite a hera!

"Why, perhaps, Lenoir my maid," says my lady, looking grave. "I wish, Miss Kicksey, you would not demean yourself by mixing with my domestics. Recollect, madam, that you are sister to Lady Griffin."

"No, my lady, it was not Lenoir; it was a gentleman, and a handsome gentleman, too."

"Oh, it was Monsieur de l'Orge, then," says Miss; "he promised to bring me some guitar-strings."

"No, nor yet M. de l'Orge. He came, but was not so

polite as to ask for me. What do you think of your own beau, the Honourable Mr. Algernon Deuceace?" and, so saying, poar Kicksey clapped her hands together, and looked as joyfle as if she'd come into a fortin.

"Mr. Deuceace here! and why, pray?" says my lady, who recklected all that his exlent pa had been saying to her.

"Why, in the first place, he had left his pocket-book, and in the second, he wanted, he said, a dish of my nice tea; which he took, and stayed with me an hour or moar."

"And pray, Miss Kicksey," said Miss Matilda, quite contempshusly, "what may have been the subject of your conversation with Mr. Algernon? Did you talk politics, or music, or fine arts, or metaphysics?" Miss M. being what was called a *blue* (as most hump-backed women in sosiaty are), always made a pint to speak on these grand subjects.

"No, indeed; he talked of no such awful matters. If he had, you know, Matilda, I should never have understood him. First we talked about the weather, next about muffins and crumpets. Crumpets, he said, he liked best; and then we talked" (here Miss Kicksey's voice fell) "about poor dear Sir George in heaven! what a good husband he was, and——"

"What a good fortune he left—eh, Miss Kicksey?" says my lady, with a hard, sneering voice, and a diabollicle grin.

"Yes, dear Leonora, he spoke so respectfully of your blessed husband, and seemed so anxious about you and Matilda, it was quite charming to hear him, dear man!"

"And pray, Miss Kicksey, what did you tell him?"

"Oh, I told him that you and Leonora had nine thousand a year, and——"

"What then?"

"Why, nothing; that is all I know. I am sure I wish I had ninety," says poor Kicksey, her eyes turning to heaven.

"Ninety fiddlesticks! Did not Mr. Deuceace ask how the money was left, and to which of us?"

"Yes; but I could not tell him."

"I knew it!" says my lady, slapping down her tea-cup—"I knew it!"

"Well," says Miss Matilda, "and why not, Lady Griffin? There is no reason you should break your tea-cup because

Algernon asks a harmless question. *He* is not mercenary; he is all candour, innocence, generosity! He is himself blest with a sufficient portion of the world's goods to be content; and often and often has he told me he hoped the woman of his choice might come to him without a penny, that he might show the purity of his affection."

"I've no doubt," says my lady. "Perhaps the lady of his choice is Miss Matilda Griffin!" and she flung out of the room, slamming the door, and leaving Miss Matilda to bust into tears, as was her reglar custom, and pour her loves and woas into the buzzom of Miss Kicksey.

CHAPTER IV.

"HITTING THE NALE ON THE HEDD."

THE nex morning, down came me and master to Lady Griffinses—I amusing myself with the gals in the antyroom, he paying his devours to the ladies in the salong. Miss was thrumming on her gitter; my lady was before a great box of papers, busy with accounts, bankers' books, lawyers' letters, and what not. Law bless us! it's a kind of bisniss I should like well enuff, especially when my hannual account was seven or eight thousand on the right side, like my lady's. My lady in this house kep all these matters to herself. Miss was a vast deal too sentrimentle to mind business.

Miss Matilda's eyes sparkled as master came in; she pinted gracefully to a place on the sofy beside her, which Deuceace took. My lady only looked up for a moment, smiled very kindly, and down went her head among the papers agen, as busy as a B.

"Lady Griffin has had letters from London," says Miss, "from nasty lawyers and people. Come here and sit by me, you naughty man you!"

And down sat master. "Willingly," says he, "my dear Miss Griffin; why, I declare, it is quite a *tête-à-tête*."

"Well," says Miss (after the prillimnary flumries, in coarse), "we met a friend of yours at the Embassy, Mr Deuceace."

"My father, doubtless; he is a great friend of the ambassador, and surprised me myself by a visit the night before last."

"What a dear delightful old man! how he loves you, Mr. Deuceace!"

"Oh, amazingly!" says master, throwing his i's to heaven. "He spoke of nothing but you, and such praises of you!"

Master breathed more freely. "He is very good, my dear father; but blind, as all fathers are, he is so partial and attached to me."

"He spoke of you being his favourite child, and regretted that you were not his eldest son. 'I can but leave him the small portion of a younger brother,' he said. 'But never mind; he has talents, a noble name, and an independence of his own.'"

"An independence? yes, oh yes; I am quite independent of my father."

"Two thousand pounds a year left you by your godmother; the very same you told us, you know."

"Neither more nor less," says master, bobbing his head; "a sufficiency, my dear Miss Griffin,—to a man of my moderate habits an ample provision."

"By-the-bye," cries out Lady Griffin, interrupting the conversation, "you who are talking about money matters there, I wish you would come to the aid of poor *me!* Come, naughty boy, and help me out with this long, long sum."

Didn't he go—that's all! My i, how his i's shone as he skipt across the room and seated himself by my lady!

"Look!" said she, "my agents write me over that they have received a remittance of 7,200 rupees, at 2s. 9d. a rupee. Do tell me what the sum is, in pounds and shillings;" which master did with great gravity.

"Nine hundred and ninety pounds. Good; I daresay you are right. I'm sure I can't go through the fatigue to see. And now comes another question. Whose money is this—mine or Matilda's? You see it is the interest of a sum in India, which we have not had occasion to touch; and, according to the terms of poor Sir George's will, I really don't know how to dispose of the money except to spend it. —Matilda, what shall we do with it?"

"La, ma'am, I wish you would arrange the business yourself."

"Well, then, Algernon, *you* tell me;" and she laid her hand on his, and looked him most patheticklY in the face.

"Why," says he, "I don't know how Sir George left his money; you must let me see his will first."

"Oh, willingly."

Master's chair seemed suddenly to have got springs in the cushns; he was obliged to *hold himself down.*

"Look here, I have only a copy, taken by my hand from Sir George's own manuscript. Soldiers, you know, do not employ lawyers much, and this was written on the night before going into action." And she read, "'I, George Griffin,' &c., &c.—you know how these things begin—'being now of sane mind'—um, um, um—'leave to my friends, Thomas Abraham Hicks (a colonel in the H. E. I. Company's service), and to John Monro Mackirkincroft (of the house of Huffle, Mackirkincroft, and Dobbs, at Calcutta), the whole of my property, to be realized as speedily as they may (consistently with the interests of the property), in trust for my wife, Leonora Emilia Griffin (born L. E. Kicksey), and my only legitimate child, Matilda Griffin. The interest resulting from such property to be paid to them, share and share alike; the principal to remain untouched, in the names of the said T. A. Hicks and J. M. Mackirkincroft, until the death of my wife, Leonora Emilia Griffin, when it shall be paid to my daughter, Matilda Griffin, her heirs, executors, or assigns.'"

"There," said my lady, "we won't read any more; all the rest is stuff. But now you know the whole business, tell us what is to be done with the money."

"Why, the money, unquestionably, should be divided between you."

"*Tant mieux*, say I; I really thought it had been all Matilda's."

* * * * *

There was a paws for a minit or two after the will had been read. Master left the desk at which he had been seated with her ladyship, paced up and down the room for a while,

and then came round to the place where Miss Matilda was seated. At last he said, in a low, trembling voice,—

"I am almost sorry, my dear Lady Griffin, that you have read that will to me; for an attachment such as mine must seem, I fear, mercenary, when the object of it is so greatly favoured by worldly fortune. Miss Griffin—Matilda! I know I may say the word; your dear eyes grant me the permission. I need not tell you, or you, dear mother-in-law, how long, how fondly, I have adored you. My tender, my beautiful Matilda, I will not affect to say I have not read your heart ere this, and that I have not known the preference with which you have honoured me. *Speak it*, dear girl! from your own sweet lips; in the presence of an affectionate parent, utter the sentence which is to seal my happiness for life. Matilda, dearest Matilda! say, oh say, that you love me!"

Miss M. shivered, turned pail, rowled her eyes about, and fell on master's neck, whispering hodibly, "*I do!*"

My lady looked at the pair for a moment with her teeth grinding, her i's glaring, her busm throbbing, and her face chock white; for all the world like Madam Pasty, in the oppra of "Mydear" (when she's goin to mudder her childring, you recklect); and out she flounced from the room, without a word, knocking down poar me, who happened to be very near the dor, and leaving my master along with his crook-back mistress.

I've repotted the speech he made to her pretty well. The fact is, I got it in a ruff copy; only on the copy it's wrote, "*Lady Griffin, Leonora!*" instead of "*Miss Griffin, Matilda*," as in the abuff, and so on.

Master had hit the right nail on the head this time, he thought: but his adventors an't over yet.

CHAPTER V.

THE GRIFFIN'S CLAWS.

WELL, master had hit the right nail on the head this time, thanx to luck—the crooked one, to be sure, but then it had

the *goold nobb*, which was the part Deuceace most valued, as well he should; being a connyshure as to the relletiff valyou of pretious metals, and much preferring virging goold like this to poor old battered iron like my Lady Griffin.

And so, in spite of his father (at which old noblemin Mr. Deuceace now snapt his fingers), in spite of his detts (which, to do him Justas, had never stood much in his way), and in spite of his povatty, idleness, extravagans, swindling, and debotcheries of all kinds (which an't *generally* very favorabble to a young man who has to make his way in the world)—in spite of all, there he was, I say, at the topp of the trea, the fewcher master of a perfect fortun, the defianced husband of a fool of a wife. What can mortial man want more? Vishns of ambishn now occupied his soal — shooting boxes, oppra boxes, money boxes always full; hunters at Melton; a seat in the House of Commins: Heaven knows what! and not a poar footman, who only describes what he's seen, and can't, in cors, pennytrate into the idears and the busms of men.

You may be shore that the three-cornerd noats came pretty thick now from the Griffinses. Miss was always a-writing them befoar; and now, nite, noon, and mornink, breakfast, dinner, and sopper, in they came, till my pantry (for master never read 'em, and I carried 'em out) was puffickly intolrabble from the odor of musk, ambygrease, bargymot, and other sense with which they were impregniated. Here's the contense of three on 'em, which I've kep in my dex these twenty years as skewriosities. Faw! I can smel 'em at this very minit, as I am copying them down.

BILLY DOO. No. I.

"*Monday morning*, 2 *o'clock*.

"'Tis the witching hour of night. Luna illumines my chamber, and falls upon my sleepless pillow. By her light I am inditing these words to thee, my Algernon. My brave and beautiful, my soul's lord! when shall the time come when the tedious night shall not separate us, nor the blessed day? Twelve! one! two! I have heard the bells chime, and the quarters, and never cease to think of my husband. My adored Percy, pardon the girlish confession—I have kissed

the letter at this place. Will thy lips press it too, and remain for a moment on the spot which has been equally saluted by your MATILDA?"

This was the *fust* letter, and was brot to our house by one of the poar footmin, Fitzclarence, at sicks o'clock in the morning. I thot it was for life and death, and woak master at that extraornary hour, and gave it to him. I shall never forgit him when he red it; he cramped it up, and he cust and swoar, applying to the lady who roat, the genlmn that brought it, and me who introjuiced it to his notice, such a collection of epitafs as I seldum hered, excep at Billinxgit. The fact is thiss: for a fust letter, miss's noat was *rather* too strong and sentymentle. But that was her way; she was always reading melancholy stoary books—"Thaduse of Waw-saw," the "Sorrows of MacWhirter," and such like.

After about 6 of them, master never youred to read them, but handid them over to me, to see if there was anythink in them which must be answered, in order to kip up appear-untses. The next letter is

No. II.

"BELOVED! to what strange madnesses will passion lead one! Lady Griffin, since your avowal yesterday, has not spoken a word to your poor Matilda; has declared that she will admit no one (heigho! not even you, my Algernon); and has locked herself in her own dressing-room. I do believe that she is *jealous*, and fancies that you were in love with *her!* Ha, ha! I could have told her *another tale*—n'est-ce pas? Adieu, adieu, adieu! A thousand thousand million kisses! "M. G.

"*Monday afternoon, 2 o'clock.*"

There was another letter kem before bedtime; for though me and master called at the Griffinses, we wairn't aloud to enter at no price. Mortimer and Fitzclarence grin'd at me, as much as to say we were going to be relations; but I don't spoase master was very sorry when he was obleached to come back without seeing the fare objict of his affeckshns.

Well, on Chewsdy there was the same game; ditto on

Wensday; only, when we called there, who should we see but our father, Lord Crabs, who was waiving his hand to Miss Kicksey, and saying *he should be back to dinner at* 7, just as me and master came up the stares. There was no admittns for us though. "Bah! bah! never mind," says my lord, taking his son affeckshnately by the hand. "What, two strings to your bow; ay, Algernon? The dowager a little jealous, miss a little lovesick. But my lady's fit of anger will vanish, and I promise you, my boy, that you shall see your fair one to-morrow."

And so saying, my lord walked master down stares, looking at him as tender and affeckshnat, and speaking to him as sweet as posbill. Master did not know what to think of it. He never new what game his old father was at; only he somehow felt that he had got his head in a net, in spite of his suxess on Sunday. I knew it—I knew it quite well, as soon as I saw the old genlmn igsammin him, by a kind of smile which came over his old face, and was somethink betwigst the angellic and the direbollicle.

But master's dowts were cleared up nex day, and every thing was bright again. At brexfast, in comes a note with inclosier, boath of witch I here copy:—

No. IX.

"*Thursday morning.*

"VICTORIA, Victoria! Mamma has yielded at last; not her consent to our union, but her consent to receive you as before; and has promised to forget the past. Silly woman, how could she ever think of you as anything but the lover of your Matilda? I am in a whirl of delicious joy and passionate excitement. I have been awake all this long night, thinking of thee, my Algernon, and longing for the blissful hour of meeting.

"Come! M. G."

This is the inclosier from my lady:—

"I WILL not tell you that your behaviour on Sunday did not deeply shock me. I had been foolish enough to think of other plans, and to fancy your heart (if you had any) was fixed elsewhere than on one at whose foibles you have often

laughed with me, and whose person at least cannot have charmed you.

"My step-daughter will not, I presume, marry without at least going through the ceremony of asking my consent; I cannot, as yet, give it. Have I not reason to doubt whether she will be happy in trusting herself to you?

"But she is of age, and has the right to receive in her own house all those who may be agreeable to her—certainly you, who are likely to be one day so nearly connected with her. If I have honest reason to believe that your love for Miss Griffin is sincere; if I find in a few months that you yourself are still desirous to marry her, I can, of course, place no further obstacles in your way.

"You are welcome, then, to return to our hotel. I cannot promise to receive you as I did of old; you would despise me if I did. I can promise, however, to think no more of all that has passed between us, and yield up my own happiness for that of the daughter of my dear husband.

"L. E. G."

Well, now, an't this a manly, straitforard letter enough, and natral from a woman whom we had, to confess the truth, treated most scuvvily? Master thought so, and went and made a tender, respeckful speach to Lady Griffin (a little flumry costs nothink). Grave and sorrofle he kist her hand, and, speakin in a very low, adgitayted voice, calld Hevn to witness how he deplord that his conduct should ever have given rise to such an unfortnt ideer; but if he might offer her esteem, respect, the warmest and tenderest admiration, he trusted she would accept the same, and a deal moar flumry of the kind, with dark, sollum glansis of the eyes, and plenty of white pockit-hankercher.

He thought he'd make all safe. Poar fool! he was in a net—sich a net as I never yet see set to ketch a roag in.

CHAPTER VI.

THE JEWEL.

THE Shevalier de l'Orge, the young Frenchmin whom I wrote of in my last, who had been rather shy of his visits while master was coming it so very strong, now came back to his old place by the side of Lady Griffin: there was no love now, though, betwigst him and master, although the shevallier had got his lady back agin; Deuceace being compleatly devoted to his crookid Veanus.

The shevalier was a little, pale, moddist, insinifishnt creature; and I shoodn't have thought, from his appearants, would have the heart to do harm to a fli, much less to stand befor such a tremendious tiger and fire-eater as my master. But I see putty well, after a week, from his manner of going on—of speakin at master, and lookin at him, and olding his lips tight when Deuceace came into the room, and glarin at him with his i's, that he hated the Honrabble Algernon Percy.

Shall I tell you why? Because my Lady Griffin hated him—hated him wuss than pison, or the devvle, or even wuss than her daughter-in-law. Praps you phansy that the letter you have juss read was honest; praps you amadgin that the sean of the reading of the will came on by mere chans, and in the reglar cors of suckmstansies: it was all a *game*, I tell you—a reglar trap; and that extrodnar clever young man, my master, as neatly put his foot into it, as ever a pocher did in fesnt preserve.

The shevalier had his q from Lady Griffin. When Deuceace went off the feald, back came De l'Orge to her feet, not a witt less tender than befor. Por fellow, por fellow! he really loved this woman. He might as well have foln in love with a boreconstructor! He was so blinded and beat by the power wich she had got over him, that if she told him black was white he'd beleave it, or if she ordered him to commit murder, he'd do it: she wanted something very like it, I can tell you.

I've already said how, in the fust part of their acquaintance, master used to laff at De l'Orge's bad Inglish, and funny

ways. The little creature had a thowsnd of these; and being small, and a Frenchman, master, in cors, looked on him with that good-humoured kind of contemp which a good Brittn ot always to show. He rayther treated him like an intelligent munky than a man, and ordered him about as if he'd bean my lady's footman.

All this munseer took in very good part, until after the quarl betwigst master and Lady Griffin; when that lady took care to turn the tables. Whenever master and miss were not present (as I've heard the servants say), she used to laff at shevalliay for his obeajance and sivillatty to master. For her part, she wondered how a man of his birth could act a servnt—how any man could submit to such contemsheous behaviour from another; and then she told him how Deuceace was always snearing at him behind his back—how, in fact, he ought to hate him corjaly, and how it was suttnly time to show his sperrit.

Well, the poar little man beleaved all this from his hart, and was angry or pleased, gentle or quarlsum, igsactly as my lady liked. There got to be frequint rows betwigst him and master; sharp words flung at each other across the dinner-table; dispewts about handing ladies their smeling-botls, or seeing them to their carridge, or going in and out of a roam fust, or any such nonsince.

"For hevn's sake," I heerd my lady, in the midl of one of these tiffs, say, pail, and the tears trembling in her i's, "do, do be calm, Mr. Deuceace. Monsieur de l'Orge, I beseech you to forgive him. You are, both of you, so esteemed, lov'd, by members of this family, that for its peace as well as your own, you should forbear to quarrel."

It was on the way to the Sally Mangy that this brangling had begun, and it ended jest as they were seating themselves. I shall never forgit poar little De l'Orge's eyes, when my lady said "*both* of you." He stair'd at my lady for a momint, turned pail, red, look'd wild, and then, going round to master, shook his hand as if he would have wrung it off. Mr. Deuceace only bow'd and grin'd, and turned away quite stately; Miss heaved a loud O from her busm, and looked up in his face with an igspreshn jest as if she could have eat him up with love; and the little shevalliay sate down to his

soop-plate, and wus so happy, that I'm blest if he wasn't crying! He thought the widdow had made her declyration, and would have him; and so thought Deuceace, who looked at her for some time mighty bitter and contempshus, and then fell a-talking with Miss.

Now, though master didn't choose to marry Lady Griffin, as he might have done, he yet thought fit to be very angry at the notion of her marrying anybody else; and so, consquintly, was in a fewry at this confision which she had made regarding her parshaleaty for the French shevaleer.

And this I've perseaved in the cors of my expearants through life, that when you vex him, a roag's no longer a roag: you find him out at onst when he's in a passion, for he shows, as it ware, his cloven foot the very instnt you tread on it. At least, this is what *young* roags do; it requires very cool blood and long practis to get over this pint, and not to show your pashn when you feel it and snarl when you are angry. Old Crabs wouldn't do it; being like another noblemin, of whom I heard the Duke of Wellington say, while waiting behind his graci's chair, that if you were kicking him from behind, no one standing before him would know it, from the bewtifle smiling igspreshn of his face. Young master hadn't got so far in the thief's grammer, and, when he was angry, show'd it. And it's also to be remarked (a very profownd observatin for a footmin, but we have i's though we *do* wear plush britchis), it's to be remarked, I say, that one of these chaps is much sooner maid angry than another, because honest men yield to other people, roags never do; honest men love other people, roags only themselves; and the slightest thing which comes in the way of thir beloved objects sets them fewrious. Master hadn't led a life of gambling, swindling, and every kind of debotch to be good-tempered at the end of it, I prommis you.

He was in a pashun, and when he *was* in a pashn, a more insalent, insuffrable, overbearing broot didn't live.

This was the very pint to which my lady wished to bring him; for I must tell you, that though she had been trying all her might to set master and the shevalliay by the years, she had suxcaded only so far as to make them hate each other profowndly: but somehow or other, the 2 cox wouldn't *fight*.

I doan't think Deuceace ever suspected any game on the part of her ladyship, for she carried it on so admirally, that the quarls which daily took place betwigst him and the Frenchman never seemed to come from her; on the contry, she acted as the reglar pease-maker between them, as I've just shown in the tiff which took place at the door of the Sally Mangy. Besides, the 2 young men, though reddy enough to snarl, were natrally unwilling to cum to bloes. I'll tell you why: being friends, and idle, they spent their mornins as young fashnabbles genrally do, at billiads, fensing, riding, pistle-shooting, or some such improoving study. In billiads, master beat the Frenchmn hollow (and had won a pretious sight of money from him: but that's neither here nor there, or, as the French say, *entry noo*); at pistle-shooting, master could knock down eight immidges out of ten, and De l'Orge seven; and in fensing, the Frenchman could pink the Honorable Algernon down evry one of his weskit buttns. They'd each of them been out more than onst, for every Frenchman will fight, and master had been obleag'd to do so in the cors of his bisniss; and knowing each other's curridg, as well as the fact that either could put a hundrid bolls running into a hat at 30 yards, they wairn't very willing to try such exparrymence upon their own hats with their own heads in them. So you see they kep quiet, and only grould at each other.

But to-day Deuceace was in one of his thundering black humers, and when in this way he wouldn't stop for man or devvle. I said that he walked away from the shevalliay, who had given him his hand in his sudden bust of joyfle good-humour, and who, I do bleave, would have hugd a she-bear, so very happy was he. Master walked away from him pale and hotty, and, taking his seat at table, no moor mindid the brandishments of Miss Griffin, but only replied to them with a pshaw, or a dam at one of us servnts, or abuse of the soop, or the wine; cussing and swearing like a trooper, and not like a wel-bred son of a noble British peer.

"Will your ladyship," says he, slivering off the wing of a *pully ally bashymall*, "allow me to help you?"

"I thank you! no; but I will trouble Monsieur de l'Orge."

And towards that gnlmn she turned, with a most tender and fasnating smile.

"Your ladyship has taken a very sudden admiration for Mr. de l'Orge's carving. You used to like mine once."

"You are very skilful; but to-day, if you will allow me, I will partake of something a little simpler."

The Frenchman helped; and, being so happy, in cors, spilt the gravy. A great blob of brown sos spurted on to master's chick, and myandrewd down his shert collar and virging-white weskit.

"Confound you!" says he, "M. de l'Orge, you have done this on purpose." And down went his knife and fork, over went his tumbler of wine, a deal of it into poar Miss Griffinses lap, who looked fritened and ready to cry.

My lady bust into a fit of laffin, peel upon peel, as if it was the best joak in the world. De l'Orge giggled and grin'd too. "Pardong," says he; "meal pardong, mong share munseer."* And he looked as if he would have done it again for a penny.

The little Frenchman was quite in extasis. He found himself all of a suddn at the very top of the trea; and the laff for onst turned against his rivle. He actialy had the ordassaty to propose to my lady in English to take a glass of wine.

"Veal you," says he, in his jargin, "take a glas of Madère viz me, mi ladi?" And he looked round, as if he'd igsackly hit the English manner and pronunciation.

"With the greatest pleasure," says Lady G., most graciously nodding at him, and gazing at him as she drank up the wine. She'd refused master before, and *this* didn't increase his good-humer.

Well, they went on, master snarling, snapping, and swearing, making himself, I must confess, as much of a blaggard as any I ever see; and my lady employing her time betwigst him and the shevalliay, doing every think to irritate master, and flatter the Frenchmn. Desert came; and by this time, Miss was stock-still with fright, the chevaleer half tipsy with pleasure and gratafied vannaty, my lady puffickly raygent with smiles, and master bloo with rage.

* In the long dialogues, we have generally ventured to change the peculiar spelling of our friend Mr. Yellowplush.

"Mr. Deuceace," says my lady, in a most winning voice, after a little chaffing (in which she only worked him up moar and moar), "may I trouble you for a few of those grapes? they look delicious."

For answer, master seas'd hold of the grayp dish, and sent it sliding down the table to De l'Orge; upsetting, in his way, fruit-plates, glasses, dickanters, and heaven knows what.

"Monsieur de l'Orge," says he, shouting out at the top of his voice, "have the goodness to help Lady Griffin. She wanted *my* grapes long ago, and has found out they are sour!"

* * * * *

There was a dead paws of a moment or so.

* * * * *

"Ah!" says my lady, "vous osez m'insulter, devant mes gens, dans ma propre maison—c'est par trop fort, monsieur." And up she got, and flung out of the room. Miss followed her, screeching out, "Mamma — for God's sake — Lady Griffin!" and here the door slammed on the pair.

Her ladyship did very well to speak French. *De l'Orge would not have understood her else.* As it was he heard quite enough; and as the door clikt too, in the presents of me, and Messeers Mortimer and Fitzclarence, the family footmen, he walks round to my master, and hits him a slap on the face, and says, "Prends ça, menteur et lâche!" which means, "Take that, you liar and coward!"—raythe strong igspreshns for one genlmn to use to another.

Master staggered back and looked bewildered; and then he gave a kind of a scream, and then he made a run at the Frenchman, and then me and Mortimer flung ourselves upon him, whilst Fitzclarence embraced the shevalliay.

"A demain!" says he, clinching his little fist, and walking away not very sorry to git off.

When he was fairly down stares, we let go of master, who swallowed a goblit of water, and then pawsing a little, and pulling out his pus, he presented to Messeers Mortimer and Fitzclarence a luydor each. "I will give you five more tomorrow," says he, "if you will promise to keep this secrit."

And then he walked in to the ladies. "If you knew," says he, going up to Lady Griffin, and speaking very slow (in

cors we were all at the keyhole), "the pain I have endured in the last minute, in consequence of the rudeness and insolence of which I have been guilty to your ladyship, you would think my own remorse was punishment sufficient, and would grant me pardon."

My lady bowed, and said she didn't wish for explanations. Mr. Deuceace was her daughter's guest, and not hers; but she certainly would never demean herself by sitting again at table with him. And so saying, out she boltid again.

"Oh! Algernon! Algernon!" says Miss, in teers, "what is this dreadful mystery—these fearful, shocking quarrels? Tell me, has anything happened? Where, where is the chevalier?"

Master smiled and said, "Be under no alarm, my sweetest Matilda. De l'Orge did not understand a word of the dispute; he was too much in love for that. He is but gone away for half an hour, I believe, and will return to coffee."

I knew what master's game was, for if Miss had got a hinkling of the quarrel betwigst him and the Frenchman, we should have had her screeming at the "Hôtel Mirabeu," and the juice and all to pay. He only stopped for a few minnits and cumfitted her, and then drove off to his friend, Captain Bullseye, of the Rifles; with whom, I spose, he talked over this unplesnt bisniss. We fownd, at our hotel, a note from De l'Orge, saying where his seckond was to be seen.

Two mornings after there was a parrowgraf in *Gallynanny's Messinger*, which I hear beg leaf to transcribe:—

"*Fearful Duel.*—Yesterday morning, at six o'clock, a meeting took place, in the Bois de Boulogne, between the Hon. A. P. D-ce-ce, a younger son of the Earl of Cr-bs, and the Chevalier de l'O——. The chevalier was attended by Major de M——, of the Royal Guard, and the Hon. Mr. D—— by Captain B-lls-ye, of the British Rifle Corps. As far as we have been able to learn the particulars of this deplorable affair, the dispute originated in the house of a lovely lady (one of the most brilliant ornaments of our embassy), and the duel took place on the morning ensuing.

"The chevalier (the challenged party, and the most accomplished amateur swordsman in Paris) waived his right of

choosing the weapons, and the combat took place with pistols.

"The combatants were placed at forty paces, with directions to advance to a barrier which separated them only eight paces. Each was furnished with two pistols. Monsieur de l'O—— fired almost immediately, and the ball took effect in the left wrist of his antagonist, who dropped the pistol which he held in that hand. He fired, however, directly with his right, and the chevalier fell to the ground, we fear mortally wounded. A ball has entered above his hip-joint, and there is very little hope that he can recover.

"We have heard that the cause of this desperate duel was a blow which the chevalier ventured to give to the Hon. Mr. D. If so, there is some reason for the unusual and determined manner in which the duel was fought.

"Mr. Deu-a-e returned to his hotel; whither his excellent father, the Right Hon. Earl of Cr-bs, immediately hastened on hearing of the sad news, and is now bestowing on his son the most affectionate parental attention. The news only reached his lordship yesterday at noon, while at breakfast with his Excellency Lord Bobtail, our ambassador. The noble earl fainted on receiving the intelligence; but in spite of the shock to his own nerves and health, persisted in passing last night by the couch of his son."

And so he did. "This is a sad business, Charles," says my lord to me, after seeing his son, and settling himself down in our salong. "Have you any segars in the house? And, hark ye, send me up a bottle of wine and some luncheon. I can certainly not leave the neighbourhood of my dear boy."

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONSQUINSIES.

THE shevalliay did not die, for the ball came out of its own accord, in the midst of a violent fever and inflamayshn which was brot on by the wound. He was kept in bed for 6 weeks though, and did not recover for a long time after.

As for master, his lot, I'm sorry to say, was wuss than that of his advisary. Inflammation came on too, and, to make an ugly story short, they were obliged to take off his hand at the rist.

He bore it, in cors, like a Trojin, and in a month he too was well, and his wound heel'd; but I never see a man look so like a devvle as he used sometimes, when he looked down at the stump!

To be sure, in Miss Griffinses eyes, this only indeerd him the mor. She sent twenty noats a day to ask for him, calling him her beloved, her unfortnat, her hero, her wictim, and I dono what. I've kep some of the noats as I tell you, and curiously sentimentle they are, beating the sorrows of Mac-Whirter all to nothink.

Old Crabs used to come offen, and consumed a power of wine and seagars at our house. I bleave he was at Paris because there was an exycution in his own house in England; and his son was a sure find (as they say) during his illness, and couldn't deny himself to the old genlmn. His eveninx my lord spent reglar at Lady Griffin's; where, as master was ill, I didn't go any more now, and where the shevalier wasn't there to disturb him.

"You see how that woman hates you, Deuceace," says my lord one day, in a fit of cander, after they had been talking about Lady Griffin: "*she has not done with you yet*, I tell you fairly."

"Curse her," says master, in a fury, lifting up his maim'd arm—"curse her! but I will be even with her one day. I am sure of Matilda: I took care to put that beyond the reach of a failure. The girl must marry me, for her own sake."

"*For her own sake!* O ho! Good, good!" My lord lifted his i's, and said gravely, "I understand, my dear boy: it is an excellent plan."

"Well," says master, grinning fearcely and knowingly at his exlent old father, "as the girl is safe, what harm can I fear from the fiend of a stepmother?"

My lord only gev a long whizzle, and, soon after, taking up his hat, walked off. I saw him sawnter down the Plas Vandome, and go in quite calmly to the old door of Lady

Griffinses hotel. Bless his old face! such a puffickly good-natured, kind-hearted, merry, selfish old scoundrel, I never shall see again.

His lordship was quite right in saying to master that "Lady Griffin hadn't done with him." No moar she had. But she never would have thought of the nex game she was going to play, *if somebody hadn't put her up to it.* Who did? If you red the above passidge, and saw how a venrabble old genlmn took his hat, and sauntered down the Plas Vandome (looking hard and kind at all the nussary-maids—*buns* they call them in France—in the way), I leave you to guess who was the author of the nex skeam: a woman, suttnly, never would have pitcht on it.

In the fuss payper which I wrote concerning Mr. Deuceace's adventers, and his kind behayviour to Messeers. Dawkins and Blewitt, I had the honor of laying before the public a skidewl of my master's detts, in witch was the following itim:—

"Bills of xchange and I.O.U.'s, £4,963, os. od."

The I.O.U.se were trifling, say a thowsnd pound. The bills amountid to four thowsnd moar.

Now, the lor is in France, that if a genlmn gives these in England, and a French genlmn gits them in any way, he can pursew the Englishman who has drawn them, even though he should be in France. Master did not know this fact—labouring under a very common mistak, that, when onst out of England, he might wissle at all the debts he left behind him.

My Lady Griffin sent over to her slissators in London, who made arrangemints with the persons who possest the fine collection of ortografs on stampt paper which master had left behind him; and they were glad enuff to take any oppertunity of getting back their money.

One fine morning, as I was looking about in the courtyard of our hotel, talking to the servant-gals, as was my reglar custom, in order to improve myself in the French languidge, one of them comes up to me and says, "Tenez, Monsieur Charles, down below in the office there is a bailiff, with a couple of gendarmes, who is asking for your master—a-t-il des dettes par hasard?"

I was struck all of a heap—the truth flasht on my mind's hi. "Toinette," says I—for that was the gal's name—"Toinette," says I, giving her a kiss, "keep them for two minnits, as you valyou my affeckshn;" and then I gave her another kiss, and ran up stares to our chambers. Master had now pretty well recovered of his wound, and was aloud to drive abowt: it was lucky for him that he had the strength to move. "Sir, sir," says I, "the bailiffs are after you, and you must run for your life."

"Bailiffs?" says he; "nonsense! I don't (thank heaven!) owe a shilling to any man."

"Stuff, sir!" says I, forgetting my respeck; "don't you owe money in England? I tell you the bailiffs are here, and will be on you in a moment."

As I spoke, cling cling, ling ling, goes the bell of the anty-shamber; and there they were, sure enough!

What was to be done? Quick as litening I throws off my livry coat, claps my goold lace hat on master's head, and makes him put on my livry. Then I wraps myself up in his dressing-gown, and lolling down on the sofa, bids him open the door.

There they were—the bailiff—two jondarms with him—Toinette, and an old waiter. When Toinette sees master, she smiles, and says, "Dis donc, Charles! où est donc ton maître? Chez lui, n'est-ce pas? C'est le jeune homme à monsieur," says she, curtsying to the bailiff.

The old waiter was just a-going to blurt out, "Mais ce n'est pas!" when Toinette stops him, and says, "Laissez donc passer ces messieurs, vieux bête;" and in they walk, the two jon d'arms taking their post in the hall.

Master throws open the salong doar very gravely, and touching *my* hat says, "Have you any orders about the cab, sir?"

"Why, no, Chawls," says I; "I shan't drive out to-day."

The old bailiff grinned, for he understood English (having had plenty of English customers), and says in French, as master goes out, "I think, sir, you had better let your servant get a coach, for I am under the painful necessity of arresting you, au nom de la loi, for the sum of ninety-eight thousand seven hundred francs, owed by you to the Sieur

Jacques François Lebrun, of Paris;" and he pulls out a number of bills, with master's acceptances on them sure enough.

"Take a chair, sir," says I, and down he sits; and I began to chaff him, as well as I could, about the weather, my illness, my sad axdent, having lost one of my hands, which was stuck into my busum, and so on.

At last, after a minnit or two, I could contane no longer, and bust out in a horse laff.

The old fellow turned quite pail, and began to suspect somethink. "Hola!" says he; "gendarmes! à moi! à moi! Je suis flué, volé"—which means, in English, that he was reglar sold.

The jondarmes jumped into the room, and so did Toinette and the waiter. Grasefly rising from my arm-chare, I took my hand from my dressing-gownd, and, flinging it open, stuck up on the chair one of the neatest legs ever seen.

I then pinted myjestickly—to what do you think?—to my PLUSH TITES! those sellabrated inigspressables which have rendered me faymous in Yourope.

Taking the hint, the jondarmes and the servnts rord out laffing; and so did Charles Yellowplush, Esquire, I can tell you. Old Grippard the bailiff looked as if he would faint in his chare.

I heard a kab galloping like mad out of the hotel gate, and knew then that my master was safe.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE END OF MR. DEUCEACE'S HISTORY. LIMBO.

My tail is droring rabidly to a close. My suvvice with Mr. Deuceace didn't continyou very long after the last chapter, in which I described my admiral strattyjam, and my singlar self-devocean. There's very few servnts, I can tell you, who'd have thought of such a contrivance, and very few moar would have eggsycuted it when thought of.

But, after all, beyond the trifling advantich to myself in selling master's roab de sham, which you, gentle reader, may remember I woar, and in dixcovering a fipun note in one of

the pockets—beyond this, I say, there was to poar master very little advantich in what had been done. It's true he had escaped. Very good. But Frans is not like Great Brittin; a man in a livry coat, with 1 arm, is pretty easly known, and caught, too, as I can tell you.

Such was the case with master. He coodn leave Paris, moarover, if he would. What was to become, in that case, of his bride—his unchbacked hairis? He knew that young lady's *temprimong* (as the Parishers say) too well to let her long out of his site. She had nine thousand a yer. She'd been in love a duzn times befor, and mite be agin. The Honrabble Algernon Deuceace was a little too wide awake to trust much to the constnsy of so very inflammable a young creacher. Heavn bless us! it was a marycle she wasn't earlier married. I do bleave (from suttn seans that past betwigst us) that she'd have married me, if she hadn't been sejuiced by the supearor rank and indianuity of the genlmn in whose survace I was.

Well—to use a common igspreshn—the beaks were after him. How was he to manitch? He coodn get away from his debts, and he wooden quit the fare objict of his affeckshns. He was ableejd, then, as the French say, to lie perdew—going out at night, like a howl out of a hivy-bush, and returning in the daytime to his roast. For it's a maxum in France (and I wood it were followed in Ingland) that after dark no man is lible for his detts; and in any of the royal gardens—the Twillaries, the Pally Roil, or the Lucksimbug, for example—a man may wander from sunrise to evening, and hear nothing of the ojus dunns: they an't admitted into these places of public enjyment and rondyvoo any more than dogs; the centuries at the garden gate having orders to shuit all such.

Master, then, was in this uncomfrable situation—neither liking to go nor to stay! peeping out at nights to have an interview with his miss; ableagd to shuffle off her repeated questions as to the reason of all this disgeise, and to talk of his two thowsnd a year jest as if he had it and didn't owe a shilling in the world.

Of course, now, he began to grow mighty eager for the marritch.

He roat as many noats as she had done befor; swoar against delay and cerymony; talked of the pleasures of Hyming, the ardship that the ardor of two arts should be allowed to igspire, the folly of waiting for the consent of Lady Griffin. She was but a stepmother, and an unkind one. Miss was (he said) a major, might marry whom she liked; and suttnly had paid Lady G. quite as much attention as she ought, by paying her the compliment to ask her at all.

And so they went on. The curious thing was, that when master was pressed about his cause for not coming out till night-time, he was misterus; and Miss Griffin, when asked why she wooden marry, igsprest, or rather, *didn't* igspress, a simlar secrasy. Wasn't it hard? the cup seemed to be at the lip of both of 'em, and yet, somehow, they could not manitch to take a drink.

But one morning, in reply to a most desprat epistol wrote by my master over-night, Deuceace, delighted, gits an answer from his soul's beluffd, which ran thus:—

MISS GRIFFIN TO THE HON. A. P. DEUCEACE.

"DEAREST,—You say you would share a cottage with me: there is no need, luckily, for that! You plead the sad sinking of your spirits at our delayed union. Beloved, do you think *my* heart rejoices at our separation? You bid me disregard the refusal of Lady Griffin, and tell me that I owe her no further duty.

"Adored Algernon! I can refuse you no more. I was willing not to lose a single chance of reconciliation with this unnatural stepmother. Respect for the memory of my sainted father bid me do all in my power to gain her consent to my union with you; nay (shall I own it?), prudence dictated the measure: for to whom should she leave the share of money accorded to her by my father's will but to my father's child?

"But there are bounds beyond which no forbearance can go; and (thank Heaven!) we have no need of looking to Lady Griffin for sordid wealth: we have a competency without her. Is it not so, dearest Algernon?

"Be it as you wish, then, dearest, bravest, and best. Your poor Matilda has yielded to you her heart long ago;

she has no longer need to keep back her name. Name the hour, and I will delay no more, but seek for refuge in your arms from the contumely and insult which meet me ever here. MATILDA.

"P.S.—O Algernon, if you did but know what a noble part your dear father has acted throughout in doing his best endeavours to further our plans and to soften Lady Griffin! It is not *his* fault that she is inexorable as she is. I send you a note sent by her to Lord Crabs; we will laugh at it soon, *n'est-ce pas?*"

II.

"MY LORD,—In reply to your demand for Miss Griffin's hand in favour of your son, Mr. Algernon Deuceace, I can only repeat what I before have been under the necessity of stating to you—that I do not believe a union with a person of Mr. Deuceace's character would conduce to my step-daughter's happiness, and therefore *refuse my consent.* I will beg you to communicate the contents of this note to Mr. Deuceace; and implore you no more to touch upon a subject which you must be aware is deeply painful to me.

"I remain your lordship's most humble servant,

"L. E. GRIFFIN.

"*The Right Hon. the Earl of Crabs.*"

"Hang her ladyship!" says my master; "what care I for it?" As for the old lord who'd been so afishous in his kindniss and advice, master recknsiled that pretty well with thinking that his lordship knew he was going to marry ten thousand a year, and igspected to get some share of it; for he roat back the following letter to his father, as well as a flaming one to Miss:—

"THANK you, my dear father, for your kindness in that awkward business. You know how painfully I am situated just now, and can pretty well guess *both the causes* of my disquiet. A marriage with my beloved Matilda will make me the happiest of men. The dear girl consents, and laughs at the foolish pretensions of her mother-in-law. To tell you the truth, I wonder she yielded to them so long. Carry your

kindness a step further, and find for us a parson, a license, and make us two into one. We are both major, you know, so that the ceremony of a guardian's consent is unnecessary.

"Your affectionate

"ALGERNON DEUCEACE.

"How I regret that difference between us some time back! Matters are changed now, and shall be more still *after the marriage.*"

I knew what my master meant—that he would give the old lord the money after he was married; and, as it was probble that Miss would see the letter he roat, he made it such as not to let her see two clearly into his present uncomfrable situation.

I took this letter along with the tender one for Miss, reading both of 'em, in course, by the way. Miss, on getting hers, gave an inegspressable look with the white of her i's, kist the letter, and prest it to her busm. Lord Crabs read his quite calm, and then they fell a-talking together; and told me to wait awhile, and I should git an anser.

After a deal of counseltation, my lord brought out a card, and there was simply written on it:—

To-morrow, at the Ambassador's, at twelve.

"Carry that back to your master, Chawls," says he, "and bid him not to fail."

You may be sure I stept back to him pretty quick, and gave him the card and the messinge. Master looked sattasfied with both, but suttnly not over happy—no man is the day before his marridge; much more his marridge with a humpback, Harriss though she be.

Well, as he was a-going to depart this bachelor life, he did what every man in such suckmstansies ought to do—he made his will; that is, he made a dispasition of his property, and wrote letters to his creditors telling them of

his lucky chance, and that after his marridge he would sutnly pay them every stiver. *Before*, they must know his povvaty well enough to be sure that paymint was out of the question.

To do him justas, he seam'd to be inclined to do the thing that was right, now that it didn't put him to any inkinvenients to do so.

"Chawls," says he, handing me over a tenpun-note, "here's your wagis, and thank you for getting me out of the scrape with the bailiffs; when I am married, you shall be my valet out of liv'ry, and I'll treble your salary."

His vallit! praps his butler! Yes, thought I, here's a chance—a vallit to ten thousand a year. Nothing to do but to shave him, and read his notes, and let my wiskers grow; to dress in spick and span black, and a clean shut per day; muffings every night in the housekeeper's room; the pick of the gals in the servents' hall; a chap to clean my boots for me, and my master's oppra bone reglar once a week. *I* knew what a vallit was as well as any genlmn in service; and this I can tell you, he's genrally a hapier, idler, hundsomer, mor genlmnly man than his master. He has more money to spend, for genlmn *will* leave their silver in their weskit pockets; more suxess among the gals; as good dinners, and as good wine—that is, if he's friends with the butler; and friends in corse they will be if they know which way their interest lies.

But these are only cassels in the air, what the French call *shutter d'Espang*. It wasn't roat in the book of fate that I was to be Mr. Deuceace's vallit.

Days will pass at last—even days befor a wedding (the longist and unpleasantist day in the whole of a man's life, I can tell you, excep, may be, the day before his hanging); and at length Aroarer dawned on the suspicious morning which was to unite in the bonds of Hyming the Honrabble Algernon Percy Deuceace, Exquire, and Miss Matilda Griffin. My master's wardrobe wasn't so rich as it had been, for he'd left the whole of his nicknax and trumpry of dressing-cases and rob dy shams, his bewtifle museum of varnished boots, his curous collecksh̃n of Stulz and Staub coats, when he had been ableaged to quit so sudnly our pore dear lodginx at the

Hôtel Mirabew; and being incog at a friend's house, ad contentid himself with ordring a coople of shoots of cloves from a common tailor, with a suffishnt quantaty of linning.

Well, he put on the best of his coats—a blue; and I thought it my duty to ask him whether he'd want his frock again; and he was good-natured, and said, "Take it and be hanged to you." Half-past eleven o'clock came, and I was sent to look out at the door if there were any suspicious charicters (a precious good nose I have to find a bailiff out, I can tell you, and an i which will almost see one round a corner); and presenly a very modest green glass-coach droave up, and in master stept. I didn't, in corse, appear on the box, because, being known, my appearints might have compromised master. But I took a short cut, and walked as quick as posbil down to the Rue de Foburg St. Honoré, where his exlnsy the English ambasdor lives, and where marridges are always performed betwigst English folk at Paris.

* * * * *

There is, almost nex door to the ambasdor's hotel, another hotel, of that lo kind which the French call cabbyrays, or wine-houses; and jest as master's green glass-coach pulled up, another coach drove off, out of which came two ladies whom I knew pretty well—suffiz, that one had a humpback, and the ingenious reader will know why *she* came there; the other was poor Miss Kicksey, who came see her turned off.

Well, master's glass coach droav up, jest as I got within a few yards of the door; our carridge, I say, droav up, and stopt. Down gits coachmin to open the door, and comes I to give Mr. Deuceace an arm, when—out of the cabaray shoot four fellows, and draw up betwigst the coach and embassy-doar; two other chaps go to the other doar of the carridge, and, opening it, one says—"Rendez-vous, M. Deuceace! Je vous arrête au nom de la loi!" (which means, "Get out of that, Mr. D.; you are nabbed, and no mistake"). Master turned gashly pail, and sprung to the other side of the coach as if a serpint had stung him. He flung open the door, and was for making off that way, but he saw the four chaps standing betwigst libbarty and him. He slams down the front window, and screams

out, "Fouettez, cocher!" (which means, "Go it, coachmin!") in a despert loud voice; but coachmin wooden go it, and besides was off his box.

The long and short of the matter was, that jest as I came up to the door, two of the bums jumped into the carridge. I saw all; I knew my duty, and so very mornfly I got up behind.

"Tiens," says one of the chaps in the street; "c'est ce drôle qui nous a flué l'autre jour." I knew 'em, but was too melumcolly to smile.

"Où irons-nous donc?" says coachmin to the genlmn who had got inside.

A deep woice from the intearor shouted out, in reply to the coachmin, "A SAINTE PELAGIE!"

* * * * *

And now, praps, I ot to dixcribe to you the humours of the prizn of Sainte Pelagie, which is the French for Fleat, or Queen's Bentch. But on this subject I'm rather shy of writing, partly because the admiral Boz has, in the history of Mr. Pickwick, made such a dixcripshun of a prizn, that mine wooden read very amyousingly afterwids; and also because, to tell you the truth, I didn't stay long in it, being not in a humer to waist my igsistance by passing away the ears of my youth in such a dull place.

My fust errint now was, as you may phansy, to carry a noat from master to his destined bride. The poar thing was sadly taken aback, as I can tell you, when she found, after remaining two hours at the Embassy, that her husband didn't make his appearance. And so, after staying on and on, and yet seeing no husband, she was forsed at last to trudge dishconslit home, where I was already waiting for her with a letter from my master.

There was no use now denying the fact of his arrest, and so he confest it at onst; but he made a cock-and-bull story of treachery of a friend, infimous fodgery, and heaven knows what. However, it didn't matter much; if he had told her that he had been betrayed by the man in the moon, she would have bleavd him.

Lady Griffin never used to appear now at any of my visits. She kep one drawing-room, and Miss dined and lived alone

in another; they quarld so much that praps it was best they should live apart; only my Lord Crabs used to see both, comforting each with that winning and innsnt way he had. He came in as Miss, in tears, was lisning to my account of master's seazure, and hoping that the prisn wasn't a horrid place, with a nasty horrid dunjeon, and a dreadfle jailer, and nasty horrid bread-and-water. Law bless us! she had borrod her ideers from the novvles she had been reading!

"O my lord, my lord," says she, "have you heard this fatal story?"

"Dearest Matilda, what? For heaven's sake, you alarm me! What—yes—no—is it—no, it can't be! Speak!" says my lord, seizing me by the choler of my coat. "What has happened to my boy?"

"Please you, my lord," says I, "he's at this moment in prisn, no wuss—having been incarserated about two hours ago."

"In prison? Algernon in prison? 'tis impossible. Imprisoned, for what sum? Mention it, and I will pay to the utmost farthing in my power."

"I'm sure your lordship is very kind," says I (recklecting the sean betwixgst him and master, whom he wanted to diddil out of a thowsand lb.); "and you'll be happy to hear he's only in for a trifle. Five thousand pound is, I think, pretty near the mark."

"Five thousand pounds!—confusion!" says my lord, clasping his hands and looking up to heaven, "and I have not five hundred! Dearest Matilda, how shall we help him?"

"Alas, my lord, I have but three guineas, and you know how Lady Griffin has the——"

"Yes, my sweet child, I know what you would say; but be of good cheer—Algernon, you know, has ample funds of his own."

Thinking my lord meant Dawkins' five thousand, of which, to be sure, a good lump was left, I held my tung; but I cooden help wondering at Lord Crabs' igstream compashn for his son, and Miss, with her £10,000 a year, having only 3 guineas in her pockit.

I took home (bless us, what a home!) a long and very

inflamble letter from Miss, in which she dixscribed her own sorror at the disappointment; swoar she lov'd him only the moar for his misfortns; made light of them, as a pusson for a paltry sum of five thousand pound ought never to be cast down, 'specially as he had a certain independence in view; and vowed that nothing, nothing should ever injuice her to part from him, etsettler, etsettler.

I told master of the conversation which had past betwigst me and my lord, and of his handsome offers, and his horrow at hearing of his son's being taken; and likewise mentioned how strange it was that Miss should only have 3 guineas, and with such a fortn. Bless us, I should have thot that she would always have carried a hundred thowsnd lb. in her pockit!

At this master only said Pshaw! But the rest of the story about his father seemed to dixquiet him a good deal, and he made me repeat it over agin.

He walked up and down the room agytated, and it seam'd as if a new lite was breaking in upon him.

"Chawls," says he, "did you observe—did Miss—did my father seem *particularly intimate* with Miss Griffin?"

"How do you mean, sir?" says I.

"Did Lord Crabs appear very fond of Miss Griffin?"

"He was suttnly very kind to her."

"Come, sir, speak at once: did Miss Griffin seem very fond of his lordship?"

"Why, to tell the truth, sir, I must say she seemed *very* fond of him."

"What did he call her?"

"He called her his dearest gal."

"Did he take her hand?"

"Yes, and he——"

"And he what?"

"He kist her, and told her not to be so wery down-hearted about the misfortn which had hapnd to you."

"I have it now!" says he, clinching his fist, and growing gashly pail—"I have it now—the infernal old hoary scoundrel! the wicked unnatural wretch! He would take her from me!" And he poured out a volley of oaves which are impossbill to be repeatid here.

I thot as much long ago; and when my lord kem with his vizits so pretious affeckshnt at my Lady Griffinses, I expected some such game was in the wind. Indeed, I'd heard a somethink of it from the Griffinses servnts, that my lord was mighty tender with the ladies.

One thing, however, was evident to a man of his intleckshal capassaties: he must either marry the gal at onst, or he stood very small chance of having her. He must git out of limbo immediantly, or his respectid father might be stepping into his vaykint shoes. Oh, he saw it all now—the fust attempt at arest, the marridge fixt at 12 o'clock, and the bayliffs fixt to come and intarup the marridge!—the jewel, praps, betwigst him and De l'Orge: but no, it was the *woman* who did that—a *man* don't deal such fowl blows, igspecially a father to his son; a woman may, poar thing!—she's no other means of reventch, and is used to fight with underhand wepns all her life through.

Well, whatever the pint might be, this Deuceace saw pretty clear that he'd been beat by his father at his own game—a trapp set for him onst, which had been defitted by my presnts of mind—another trap set afterwids, in which my lord had been suxesfle. Now, my lord, roag as he was, was much too good-natured to do an unkind ackshn, mearly for the sake of doing it. He'd got to that pich that he didn't mind injaries—they were all fair play to him—he gave 'em, and reseav'd them, without a thought of mallis. If he wanted to injer his son, it was to benefick himself. And how was this to be done? By getting the hairiss to himself, to be sure. The Honrabble Mr. D. didn't say so; but I knew his feelinx well enough—he regretted that he had not given the old genlmn the money he askt for.

Poar fello! he thought he had hit it; but he was wide of the mark after all.

Well, but what was to be done? It was clear that he must marry the gal at any rate—*cootky coot*, as the French say: that is, marry her, and hang the igspence.

To do so he must first git out of prisn; to get out of prisn he must pay his debts; and to pay his debts he must give every shilling he was worth. Never mind: four thousand pound is a small stake to a reglar gambler, igspecially

when he must play it, or rot for life in prisn; and when, if he plays it well, it will give him ten thousand a year.

So, seeing there was no help for it, he maid up his mind, and accordingly wrote the follying letter to Miss Griffin:—

"My Adored Matilda,—Your letter has indeed been a comfort to a poor fellow, who had hoped that this night would have been the most blessed in his life, and now finds himself condemned to spend it within a prison wall! You know the accursed conspiracy which has brought these liabilities upon me, and the foolish friendship which has cost me so much. But what matters? We have, as you say, enough, even though I must pay this shameful demand upon me; and five thousand pounds are as nothing compared to the happiness which I lose in being separated a night from thee! Courage, however! If I make a sacrifice, it is for you; and I were heartless indeed if I allowed my own losses to balance for a moment against your happiness.

"Is it not so, beloved one? *Is* not your happiness bound up with mine, in a union with me? I am proud to think so—proud, too, to offer such a humble proof as this of the depth and purity of my affection.

"Tell me that you will still be mine; tell me that you will be mine to-morrow; and to-morrow these vile chains shall be removed, and I will be free once more—or if bound, only bound to you! My adorable Matilda! my betrothed bride! write to me ere the evening closes; for I shall never be able to shut my eyes in slumber upon my prison couch, until they have been first blest by the sight of a few words from thee! Write to me, love! write to me! I languish for the reply which is to make or mar me for ever.

"Your affectionate A. P. D."

Having polisht off this epistol, master intrustid it to me to carry, and bade me at the same time to try and give it into Miss Griffin's hand alone. I ran with it to Lady Griffinses. I found Miss, as I desired, in a sollatary condition, and I presented her with master's pafewmed Billy.

She read it, and the number of size to which she gave vint, and the tears which she shed, beggar digscription. She

wep and sighed until I thought she would bust. She even claspt my hand in hers, and said, "O Charles! is he very, very miserable?"

"He is, ma'am," says I; "very miserable indeed—nobody, upon my honour, could be miserablerer."

On hearing this pethetic remark, her mind was made up at onst; and sitting down to her eskrewtaw, she immediantly obleaged master with an anser. Here it is in black and white:—

"My prisoned bird shall pine no more, but fly home to its nest in these arms! Adored Algernon, I will meet thee to-morrow, at the same place, at the same hour. Then, then, it will be impossible for aught but death to divide us.

"M. G."

This kind of flumry style comes, you see, of reading novvles, and cultivating littery purshuits in a small way. How much better is it to be puffickly ignorant of the hart of writing, and to trust to the writing of the heart. This is *my* style: artyfiz I despise, and trust compleatly to natur. But *revnong a no mootong*, as our continential friends remark: to that nice white sheep, Algernon Percy Deuceace, Exquire; that wenrabble old ram, my Lord Crabs his father; and that tender and dellygit young lamb, Miss Matilda Griffin.

She had just foalded up into its proper triangular shape the noat transcribed abuff, and I was jest on the point of saying, according to my master's orders, "Miss, if you please, the Honrabble Mr. Deuceace would be very much ableaged to you to keep the seminary which is to take place to-morrow a profound se——," when my master's father entered, and I fell back to the door. Miss, without a word, rusht into his arms, bust into teers agin, as was her reglar way (it must be confest she was of a very mist constitution), and showing to him his son's note, cried, "Look, my dear lord, how nobly your Algernon, *our* Algernon, writes to me. Who can doubt, after this, of the purity of his matchless affection?"

My lord took the letter, read it, seamed a good deal amyoused, and returning it to its owner, said, very much to my surprise, "My dear Miss Griffin, he certainly does seem

in earnest; and if you choose to make this match without the consent of your mother-in-law, you know the consequence, and are of course your own mistress."

"Consequences!—for shame, my lord! A little money, more or less, what matters it to two hearts like ours?"

"Hearts are very pretty things, my sweet young lady, but Three-per-Cents. are better."

"Nay, have we not an ample income of our own, without the aid of Lady Griffin?"

My lord shrugged his shoulders. "Be it so, my love," says he. "I'm sure I can have no other reason to prevent a union which is founded upon such disinterested affection."

And here the conversation dropt. Miss retired, clasping her hands, and making play with the whites of her i's. My lord began trotting up and down the room, with his fat hands stuck in his britchis pockits, his countnince lighted up with igstream joy, and singing, to my inordnit igstonishment:—

> "See the conquering hero comes!
> Tiddy diddy doll—tiddydoll, doll, doll."

He began singing this song, and tearing up and down the room like mad. I stood amazd; a new light broke in upon me. He wasn't going, then, to make love to Miss Griffin! Master might marry her! Had she not got the for——?

I say, I was just standing stock still, my eyes fixt, my hands puppindicklar, my mouf wide open, and these igstrordinary thoughts passing in my mind, when my lord having got to the last "doll" of his song, just as I came to the sillible "for" of my ventriloquism, or inward speech—we had eatch jest reached the pint digscribed, when the meditations of both were sudnly stopt, by my lord, in the midst of his singin and trottin match, coming bolt up aginst poar me, sending me up aginst one end of the room, himself flying back to the other; and it was only after considrabble agitation that we were at length restored to anything like a liquilibrium.

"What, *you* here, you infernal rascal?" says my lord.

"Your lordship's very kind to notus me," says I; "I am here." And I gave him a look.

He saw I knew the whole game.

And after whisling a bit, as was his habit when puzzled (I bleave he'd have only whisled if he had been told he was to be hanged in five minnits), after whisling a bit, he stops sudnly, and coming up to me, says:

"Hearkye, Charles, this marriage must take place to-morrow."

"Must it, sir?" says I; "now, for my part, I don't think ——"

"Stop, my good fellow; if it does not take place, what do you gain?"

This stagger'd me. If it didn't take place, I only lost a situation, for master had but just enough money to pay his detts; and it wooden soot my book to serve him in prisn or starving.

"Well," says my lord, "you see the force of my argument. Now, look here!" and he lugs out a crisp, fluttering, snowy HUNDRED-PUN NOTE! "If my son and Miss Griffin are married to-morrow, you shall have this; and I will, moreover, take you into my service, and give you double your present wages."

Flesh and blood cooden bear it. "My lord," says I, laying my hand upon my busm, "only give me security, and I'm yours for ever."

The old noblemin grin'd, and pattid me on the shoulder. "Right, my lad," says he, "right—you're a nice promising youth. Here is the best security." And he pulls out his pockit-book, returns the hundred-pun bill, and takes out one for fifty. "Here is half to-day; to-morrow you shall have the remainder."

My fingers trembled a little as I took the pretty fluttering bit of paper, about five times as big as any sum of money I had ever had in my life. I cast my i upon the amount; it was a fifty sure enough—a bank poss-bill, made payable to *Leonora Emilia Griffin*, and indorsed by her. The cat was out of the bag. Now, gentle reader, I spose you begin to see the game.

"Recollect from this day you are in my service."

"My lord, you overpoar me with your faviours."

"Go to the devil, sir," says he; "do your duty, and hold your tongue."

And thus I went from the service of the Honorabble Algernon Deuceace to that of his exlnsy the Right Honorabble Earl of Crabs.

* * * * *

On going back to prisn, I found Deuceace locked up in that oajus place to which his igstravygansies had deservedly led him, and felt for him, I must say, a great deal of contemp. A raskle such as he—a swindler, who had robbed poar Dawkins of the means of igsistance; who had cheated his fellow-roag, Mr. Richard Blewitt, and who was making a musnary marridge with a disgusting creacher like Miss Griffin, didn merit any compashn on my purt; and I determined quite to keep secret the suckmstansies of my privit intervew with his exlnsy my presnt master.

I gev him Miss Griffinses trianglar, which he read with a satasfied air. Then, turning to me, says he, "You gave this to Miss Griffin alone?"

"Yes, sir."

"You gave her my message?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you are quite sure Lord Crabs was not there when you gave either the message or the note?"

"Not there upon my honour," says I.

"Hang your honour, sir! Brush my hat and coat, and go *call a coach*—do you hear?"

* * * * *

I did as I was ordered; and on coming back found master in what's called, I think, the *greffe* of the prisn. The officer in waiting had out a great register, and was talking to master in the French tongue, in coarse; a number of poar prisners were looking eagerly on.

"Let us see, my lor," says he; "the debt is 98,700 francs; there are capture expenses, interest so much; and the whole sum amounts to a hundred thousand francs, *moins* 13."

Deuceace, in a very myjestic way, takes out of his pocket-book four thowsnd pun notes. "This is not French money, but I presume that you know it, M. Greffier," says he.

The greffier turned round to old Solomon, a money-changer, who had one or two clients in the prisn, and hapnd luckily to be there. "Les billets sont bons," says he. "Je les

prendrai pour cent mille douze cent francs, et j'espère, my lor, de vous revoir."

"Good," says the greffier; "I know them to be good, and I will give my lor the difference, and make out his release."

Which was done. The poar debtors gave a feeble cheer, as the great dubble iron gates swung open and clang to again, and Deuceace stept out, and me after him, to breathe the fresh hair.

He had been in the place but six hours, and was now free again—free, and to be married to ten thousand a year nex day. But, for all that, he lookt very faint and pale. He *had* put down his great stake; and when he came out of Sainte Pelagie, he had but fifty pounds left in the world!

Never mind—when onst the money's down, make your mind easy; and so Deuceace did. He drove back to the Hôtel Mirabew, where he ordered apartmince infinately more splendid than befor; and I pretty soon told Toinette, and the rest of the suvvants, how nobly he behayved, and how he valyoud four thousnd pound no more than ditch water. And such was the consquincies of my praises, and the poplarity I got for us boath, that the delighted landlady immediantly charged him dubble what she would have done if it hadn been for my stoaries.

He ordered splendid apartmince, then, for the nex week; a carridge-and-four for Fontainebleu to-morrow at 12 precisely; and having settled all these things, went quietly to the "Roshy de Cancale," where he dined, as well he might, for it was now eight o'clock. I didn't spare the shompang neither that night, I can tell you; for when I carried the note he gave me for Miss Griffin in the evening, informing her of his freedom, that young lady remarked my hagitated manner of walking and speaking, and said, "Honest Charles! he is flusht with the events of the day. Here, Charles, is a napoleon; take it and drink to your mistress."

I pockitid it; but, I must say, I didn't like the money—it went against my stomick to take it.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MARRIAGE.

WELL, the nex day came. At 12 the carridge-and-four was waiting at the ambasdor's doar; and Miss Griffin and the faithfle Kicksey were punctial to the apintment.

I don't wish to digscribe the marridge seminary—how the embasy chapling jined the hands of this loving young couple—how one of the embasy footmin was called in to witness the marridge—how Miss wep and fainted, as usial—and how Deuceace carried her, fainting, to the brisky, and drove off to Fontingblo, where they were to pass the fust weak of the honey-moon. They took no servnts, because they wisht, they said, to be privit. And so, when I had shut up the steps, and bid the postilion drive on, I bid ajew to the Honrabble Algernon, and went off strait to his exlent father.

"Is it all over, Chawls?" said he.

"I saw them turned off at igsackly a quarter past 12, my lord," says I.

"Did you give Miss Griffin the paper, as I told you, before her marriage?"

"I did, my lord, in the presents of Mr. Brown, Lord Bobtail's man, who can swear to her having had it."

I must tell you that my lord had made me read a paper which Lady Griffin had written, and which I was comishnd to give in the manner menshnd abuff. It ran to this effect:—

"ACCORDING to the authority given me by the will of my late dear husband, I forbid the marriage of Miss Griffin with the Honourable Algernon Percy Deuceace. If Miss Griffin persists in the union, I warn her that she must abide by the consequences of her act.

"LEONORA EMILIA GRIFFIN.

"*Rue de Rivoli, May* 8, 1818."

When I gave this to Miss as she entered the cortyard, a minnit before my master's arrivle, she only read it contemptiously, and said, "I laugh at the threats of Lady

Griffin;" and she toar the paper in two, and walked on, leaning on the arm of the faithful and obleaging Miss Kicksey.

I picked up the paper for fear of axdents, and brot it to my lord. Not that there was any necessaty, for he'd kep a copy, and made me and another witniss (my Lady Griffin's solissator) read them both before he sent either away.

"Good!" says he; and he projuiced from his potfolio the fello of that bewchus fifty-pun note which he'd given me yesterday. "I keep my promise, you see, Charles," says he. "You are now in Lady Griffin's service, in the place of Mr. Fitzclarence, who retires. Go to Frojé's, and get a livery."

"But, my lord," says I, "I was not to go into Lady Griffinses service, according to the bargain, but into——"

"It's all the same thing," says he; and he walked off. I went to Mr. Frojé's, and ordered a new livry; and found, likwise, that our coachmin and Munseer Mortimer had been there too. My lady's livery was changed, and was now of the same color as my old coat at Mr. Deuceace's; and I'm blest if there wasn't a tremenjious great earl's corronit on the butins, instid of the Griffin rampint, which was worn befoar.

I asked no questions, however, but had myself measured; and slep that night at the Plas Vandome. I didn't go out with the carridge for a day or two, though, my lady only taking one footmin, she said, until *her new carridge* was turned out.

I think you can guess what's in the wind *now!*

I bot myself a dressing-case, a box of Ody colong, a few duzen lawn sherts and neckcloths, and other things which were necessary for a genlmn in my rank. Silk stockings was provided by the rules of the house. And I completed the bisniss by writing the follying ginteel letter to my late master:—

"CHARLES YELLOWPLUSH, ESQUIRE, TO THE HONOURABLE A. P. DEUCEACE.

"SUR,—Suckmstansies have acurd sins I last had the honner of wating on you, which render it impossbil that I should

remane any longer in your suvvice. I'll thank you to leave out my thinx, when they come home on Sattady from the wash.

"Your obeajnt servnt,

"CHARLES YELLOWPLUSH.

"*Plas Vendôme.*"

The athography of the abuv noat, I confess, is atrocious; but *ke voolyvoo?* I was only eighteen, and hadn then the expearance in writing which I've enjide sins.

Having thus done my jewty in evry way, I shall prosead, in the nex chapter, to say what hapnd in my new place.

CHAPTER X.

THE HONEY-MOON.

THE weak at Fontingblow past quickly away; and at the end of it, our son and daughter-in-law—a pare of nice young tuttle-duvs—returned to their nest, at the Hôtel Mirabew. I suspeck that the *cock* turtle-dove was preshos sick of his barging.

When they arriv'd, the fust thing they found on their table was a large parsle wrapt up in silver paper, and a newspaper, and a couple of cards, tied up with a peace of white ribbing. In the parsle was a hansume piece of plum-cake, with a deal of sugar. On the cards was wrote, in Goffick characters,

Earl of Crabs.

And, in very small Italian,

Countess of Crabs.

And in the paper was the following parrowgraff:—

"MARRIAGE IN HIGH LIFE.—Yesterday, at the British

embassy, the Right Honourable John Augustus Altamont Plantagenet, Earl of Crabs, to Leonora Emilia, widow of the late Lieutenant-General Sir George Griffin, K.C.B. An elegant *déjeûné* was given to the happy couple by his Excellency Lord Bobtail, who gave away the bride. The *élite* of the foreign diplomacy, the Prince Talleyrand and Marshal the Duke of Dalmatia, on behalf of H.M. the King of France, honoured the banquet and the marriage ceremony. Lord and Lady Crabs intend passing a few weeks at Saint Cloud."

The above dockyments, along with my own triffling billy, of which I have also givn a copy, greated Mr. and Mrs. Deuceace on their arrivle from Fontingblo. Not being present, I can't say what Deuceace said; but I can fancy how he *lookt*, and how poor Mrs. Deuceace lookt. They weren't much inclined to rest after the fiteeg of the junny; for, in ½ an hour after their arrival at Paris, the hosses were put to the carridge agen, and down they came thundering to our country-house at St. Cloud (pronounst by those absud Frenchmin Sing Kloo), to interrup our chaste loves and delishs marridge injyments.

My lord was sittn in a crimson satan dressing-gown, lolling on a sofa at an open windy, smoaking seagars, as ushle; her ladyship, who, to du her justice, didn mind the smell, occupied another end of the room, and was working, in wusted, a pare of slippers, or an umbrellore case, or a coal-skittle, or some such nonsints. You would have thought to have sean 'em that they had been married a sentry, at least. Well, I bust in upon this conjugal *tator-tator*, and said, very much alarmed, "My lord, here's your son and daughter-in-law."

"Well," says my lord, quite calm, "and what then?"

"Mr. Deuceace!" says my lady, starting up, and looking fritened.

"Yes, my love, my son; but you need not be alarmed.—Pray, Charles, say that Lady Crabs and I will be very happy to see Mr. and Mrs. Deuceace; and that they must excuse us receiving them *en famille*.—Sit still, my blessing; take things coolly. Have you got the box with the papers?"

My lady pointed to a great green box—the same from which she had taken the papers when Deuceace fust saw them—and handed over to my lord a fine gold key. I went out, met Deuceace and his wife on the stepps, gave my messinge, and bowed them palitely in.

My lord didn't rise, but smoaked away as usual (praps a little quicker, but I can't say); my lady sat upright, looking handsum and strong. Deuceace walked in, his left arm tied to his breast, his wife and hat on the other. He looked very pale and frightened; his wife, poar thing! had her head berried in her handkerchief, and sobd fit to break her heart.

Miss Kicksey, who was in the room (but I didn't mention her—she was less than nothink in our house), went up to Mrs. Deuceace at onst, and held out her arms; she had a heart, that old Kicksey, and I respect her for it. The poor hunchback flung herself into Miss's arms, with a kind of whooping screech, and kep there for some time, sobbing in quite a historical manner. I saw there was going to be a sean, and so, in cors, left the door ajar.

"Welcome to Saint Cloud, Algy my boy!" says my lord, in a loud, hearty voice. "You thought you would give us the slip, eh, you rogue? But we knew it, my dear fellow, we knew the whole affair—did we not, my soul?—and, you see, kept our secret better than you did yours."

"I must confess, sir," says Deuceace, bowing, "that I had no idea of the happiness which awaited me in the shape of a mother-in-law."

"No, you dog; no, no," says my lord, giggling: "old birds, you know—not to be caught with chaff, like young ones. But here we are, all spliced and happy, at last. Sit down, Algernon; let us smoke a segar, and talk over the perils and adventures of the last month. My love," says my lord, turning to his lady, "you have no malice against poor Algernon, I trust? Pray shake *his hand*." (A grin.)

But my lady rose and said, "I have told Mr. Deuceace, that I never wished to see him, or speak to him, more. I see no reason, now, to change my opinion." And herewith she sailed out of the room, by the door through which Kicksey had carried poor Mrs. Deuceace.

"Well, well," says my lord, as Lady Crabs swept by, "I

was in hopes she had forgiven you; but I know the whole story, and I must confess you used her cruelly ill. Two strings to your bow!—that was your game, was it, you rogue?"

"Do you mean, my lord, that you know all that passed between me and Lady Grif—Lady Crabs, before our quarrel?"

"Perfectly. You made love to her, and she was almost in love with you; you jilted her for money; she got a man to shoot your hand off in revenge: no more dice-boxes, now, Deuceace; no more *sauter la coupe*. I can't think how the deuce you will manage to live without them."

"Your lordship is very kind; but I have given up play altogether," says Deuceace, looking mighty black and uneasy.

"Oh, indeed! Benedick has turned a moral man, has he? This is better and better. Are you thinking of going into the church, Deuceace?"

"My lord, may I ask you to be a little more serious?"

"Serious! *à quoi bon?* I am serious—serious in my surprise that, when you might have had either of these women, you should have preferred that hideous wife of yours."

"May I ask you, in turn, how you came to be so little squeamish about a wife as to choose a woman who had just been making love to your own son?" says Deuceace, growing fierce.

"How can you ask such a question? I owe forty thousand pounds—there is an execution at Sizes Hall—every acre I have is in the hands of my creditors; and that's why I married her. Do you think there was any love? Lady Crabs is a devlish fine woman, but she's not a fool: she married me for my coronet, and I married her for her money."

"Well, my lord, you need not ask me, I think, why I married the daughter-in-law."

"Yes, but I *do*, my dear boy. How the deuce are you to live? Dawkins's five thousand pounds won't last for ever; and afterwards?"

"You don't mean, my lord—you don't—I mean, you can't—— D——!" says he, starting up, and losing all patience; "you don't dare to say that Miss Griffin had not a fortune of ten thousand a year?"

My lord was rolling up, and wetting betwigst his lips, an-

other segar. He lookt up, after he had lighted it, and said quietly,—

"Certainly, Miss Griffin had a fortune of ten thousand a year."

"Well, sir, and has she not got it now? Has she spent it in a week?"

"*She has not got a sixpence now; she married without her mother's consent!*"

Deuceace sunk down in a chair, and I never see such a dreadful picture of despair as there was in the face of that retchid man! He writhed, and nasht his teeth, he tore open his coat, and wriggled madly the stump of his left hand, until, fairly beat, he threw it over his livid pale face, and sinking backwards, fairly wept alowd.

Bah! it's a dreddfle thing to hear a man crying—his pashn torn up from the very roots of his heart, as it must be before it can git such a vent. My lord, meanwhile, rolled his segar, lighted it, and went on.

"My dear boy, the girl has not a shilling. I wished to have left you alone in peace, with your four thousand pounds; you might have lived decently upon it in Germany, where money is at 5 per cent., where your duns would not find you, and a couple of hundred a year would have kept you and your wife in comfort. But, you see, Lady Crabs would not listen to it. You had injured her; and, after she had tried to kill you and failed, she determined to ruin you, and succeeded. I must own to you that I directed the arresting business, and put her up to buying your protested bills; she got them for a trifle, and as you have paid them, has made a good two thousand pounds by her bargain. It was a painful thing, to be sure, for a father to get his son arrested; but *que voulez-vous!* I did not appear in the transaction: she would have you ruined; and it was absolutely necessary *you* should marry before I could, so I pleaded your cause with Miss Griffin, and made you the happy man you are. You rogue, you rogue! you thought to match your old father, did you? But never mind; lunch will be ready soon. In the meantime, have a segar, and drink a glass of Sauterne."

Deuceace, who had been listening to this speech, sprung up wildly.

"I'll not believe it," he said; "it's a lie, an infernal lie, forged by you, you hoary villain, and by the murderess and strumpet you have married. I'll not believe it; show me the will.—Matilda! Matilda!" shouted he, screaming hoarsely, and flinging open the door by which she had gone out.

"Keep your temper, my boy. You *are* vexed, and I feel for you; but don't use such bad language—it is quite needless, believe me."

"Matilda!" shouted out Deuceace again; and the poor crooked thing came trembling in, followed by Miss Kicksey.

"Is this true, woman?" says he, clutching hold of her hand.

"What, dear Algernon?" says she.

"What?" screams out Deuceace—"what? Why, that you are a beggar, for marrying without your mother's consent—that you basely lied to me, in order to bring about this match—that you are a swindler, in conspiracy with that old fiend yonder and the she-devil his wife?"

"It is true," sobbed the poor woman, "that I have nothing but——"

"Nothing but what? Why don't you speak, you drivelling fool?"

"I have nothing; but you, dearest, have two thousand a year. Is that not enough for us? You love me for myself, don't you, Algernon? You have told me so a thousand times; say so again, dear husband, and do not, do not be so unkind." And here she sank on her knees, and clung to him, and tried to catch his hand and kiss it.

"How much did you say?" says my lord.

"Two thousand a year, sir; he has told us so a thousand times."

"*Two thousand!* Two thou—ho, ho, ho!—haw! haw! haw!" roars my lord. "That is, I vow, the best thing I ever heard in my life. My dear creature, he has not a shilling, not a single maravedi, by all the gods and goddesses." And this exlnt noblemin began laffin louder than ever: a very kind and feeling genlmn he was, as all must confess.

There was a paws; and Mrs. Deuceace didn begin cussing

and swearing at her husband as he had done at her: she only said, "O Algernon! is this true?" and got up, and went to a chair and wep in quiet.

My lord opened the great box. "If you or your lawyers would like to examine Sir George's will, it is quite at your service; you will see here the proviso which I mentioned, that gives the entire fortune to Lady Griffin—Lady Crabs that is: and here, my dear boy, you see the danger of hasty conclusions. Her ladyship only showed you the *first page of the will*, of course; she wanted to try you. You thought you made a great stroke in at once proposing to Miss Griffin—do not mind it, my love; he really loves you now very sincerely! —when, in fact, you would have done much better to have read the rest of the will. You were completely bitten, my boy—humbugged, bamboozled—ay, and by your old father, you dog. I told you I would, you know, when you refused to lend me a portion of your Dawkins money. I told you I would; and I *did*. I had you the very next day. Let this be a lesson to you, Percy, my boy; don't try your luck again against such old hands; look deuced well before you leap; *audi alteram partem*, my lad, which means, read both sides of the will. I think lunch is ready; but I see you don't smoke. Shall we go in?"

"Stop, my lord," says Mr. Deuceace, very humble: "I shall not share your hospitality—but—but you know my condition; I am penniless. You know the manner in which my wife has been brought up——"

"The Honourable Mrs. Deuceace, sir, shall always find a home here, as if nothing had occurred to interrupt the friendship between her dear mother and herself."

"And for me, sir," says Deuceace, speaking faint, and very slow; "I hope—I trust—I think, my lord, you will not forget me?"

"Forget you, sir; certainly not."

"And that you will make some provision——"

"Algernon Deuceace," says my lord, getting up from the sophy, and looking at him with sich a jolly malignity as *I* never see, "I declare, before Heaven, that I will not give you a penny!"

Hereupon my lord held out his hand to Mrs. Deuceace,

and said, "My dear, will you join your mother and me? We shall always, as I said, have a home for you."

"My lord," said the poar thing, dropping a curtsy, "my home is with *him!*"

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About three months after, when the season was beginning at Paris, and the autumn leafs was on the ground, my lord, my lady, me and Mortimer, were taking a stroal in the Boddy Balong, the carridge driving on slowly a head, and us as happy as possbill, admiring the pleasant woods and goldn sunset.

My lord was expayshating to my lady upon the exquizit beauty of the sean, and pouring forth a host of butifle and virtuous sentaments sootable to the hour. It was dalitefle to hear him. "Ah!" said he, "black must be the heart, my love, which does not feel the influence of a scene like this—gathering, as it were, from those sunlit skies, a portion of their celestial gold, and gaining somewhat of heaven with each pure draught of this delicious air!"

Lady Crabs did not speak, but prest his arm and looked upwards. Mortimer and I, too, felt some of the infliwents of the sean, and lent on our goold sticks in silence. The carriage drew up close to us, and my lord and my lady sauntered slowly tords it.

Jest at the place was a bench, and on the bench sate a poorly drest woman, and by her, leaning against a tree, was a man whom I thought I'd sean befor. He was drest in a shabby blew coat, with white seems and copper buttons; a torn hat was on his head, and great quantaties of matted hair and whiskers disfiggared his countnints. He was not shaved, and as pale as stone.

My lord and lady didn tak the slightest notice of him, but past on to the carridge. Me and Mortimer lickwise took *our* places. As we past, the man had got a grip of the woman's shoulder, who was holding down her head, sobbing bitterly.

No sooner were my lord and lady seated, than they both, with igstream dellixy and good natur, bust into a ror of lafter, peal upon peal, whooping and screaching enough to frighten the evening silents.

DEUCEACE turned round. I see his face now—the face of a devvle of hell! Fust, he lookt towards the carridge, and pinted to it with his maimed arm; then he raised the other, *and struck the woman by his side.* She fell, screaming.

Poor thing! Poor thing!

MR. YELLOWPLUSH'S AJEW.

THE end of Mr. Deuceace's history is going to be the end of my corrispondince. I wish the public was as sory to part with me as I am with the public; becaws I fansy reely that we've become frends, and feal for my part a becoming greaf at saying ajew.

It's imposbill for me to continyow, however, a-writin, as I have done, violetting the rules of authography, and trampling upon the fust princepills of English grammar. When I began, I knew no better; when I'd carrid on these papers a little further, and grew accustmd to writin, I began to smel out somethink quear in my style. Within the last sex weaks I have been learning to spell; and when all the world was rejoicing at the festivvaties of our youthful Quean*—when all i's were fixt upon her long sweet of ambasdors and princes, following the splendid carridge of Marshle the Duke of Damlatiar, and blinking at the pearls and dimince of Prince Oystereasy—Yellowplush was in his loanly pantry, *his* eyes were fixt upon the spelling-book, his heart was bent upon mastring the diffickleties of the littery professhn. I have been, in fact, *convertid.*

You shall here how. Ours, you know, is a Wig house; and ever sins his third son has got a place in the Treasury, his secknd a captingsy in the Guards, his fust, the secretary of embasy at Pekin, with a prospick of being appinted ambasdor at Loo Choo—ever sins master's sons have reseaved these attentions, and master himself has had the promis of a pearitch, he has been the most reglar, consistnt, honrabble Libbaral, in or out of the House of Commins.

Well, being a Whig, it's the fashn, as you know, to reseave

* This was written in 1838.

littery pipple; and accordingly, at dinner, tother day, whose name do you think I had to hollar out on the fust landing-place about a wick ago? After several dukes and markises had been enounced, a very gentell fly drives up to our doar, and out steps two gentlemen. One was pail, and wor spek-tickles, a wig, and a white neckcloth. The other was slim, with a hook nose, a pail fase, a small waist, a pare of falling shoulders, a tight coat, and a catarack of black satting tum-bling out of his busm, and falling into a gilt velvet weskit. The little genlmn settled his wigg, and pulled out his ribbins; the younger one fluffed the dust of his shoos, looked at his wiskers in a little pockit-glas, settled his crevatt, and they both mounted up-stairs.

"What name, sir?" says I to the old genlmn.

"Name!—a! now, you thief o' the wurrld," says he, "do you pretind nat to know *me?* Say it's the Cabinet Cyclopa—no, I mane the Litherary Chran—psha!—bluthanowns!—say it's DOCTHOR DIOCLESIAN LARNER—I think he'll know me now—ay, Nid?" But the genlmn called Nid was at the botm of the stare, and pretended to be very busy with his shoo-string. So the little genlmn went up-stares alone.

"DOCTOR DIOLESIUS LARNER!" says I.

"DOCTOR ATHANASIUS LARDNER!" says Greville Fitz-Roy, our seckndfootman, on the fust landing-place.

"**Doctor Egnatius Loyola!**" says the groom of the chambers, who pretends to be a schollar; and in the little genlmn went. When safely housed, the other chap came; and when I asked him his name, said, in a thick, gobbling kind of voice,—

"Sawedwadgeorgeearllittnbulwig."

"Sir what?" says I, quite aghast at the name.

"Sawedwad—no, I mean *Mista*wedwad Lyttn Bulwig."

My neas trembled under me, my i's fild with tiers, my voice shook, as I past up the venrabble name to the other footman, and saw this fust of English writers go up to the drawing-room!

It's needless to mention the names of the rest of the compny, or to dixcribe the suckmstansies of the dinner. Suffiz to say that the two littery genlmn behaved very well, and seamed to have good appytights; igspecially the little

Irishman in the whig, who et, drunk, and talked as much as ½ a duzn. He told how he'd been presented at cort by his friend, Mr. Bulwig, and how the Quean had received 'em both, with a dignity undigscribable; and how her blessid Majisty asked what was the bony fidy sale of the Cabinit Cyclopædy, and how he (Doctor Larner) told her that, on his honner, it was under ten thowsnd.

You may guess that the Doctor, when he made this speach, was pretty far gone. The fact is, that whether it was the coronation, or the goodness of the wine (cappitle it is in our house, *I* can tell you), or the natral propensaties of the gests assembled, which made them so igspecially jolly, I don't know; but they had kep up the meating pretty late, and our poar butler was quite tired with the perpechual baskits of clarrit which he'd been called upon to bring up. So that about 11 o'clock, if I were to say they were merry, I should use a mild term; if I were to say they were intawsicated, I should use an igspresshn more near to the truth, but less rispeckful in one of my situashn.

The cumpany reseaved this annountsmint with mute astonishment.

"Pray, Doctor Larnder," says a spiteful genlmn, willing to keep up the littery conversation, "what is the Cabinet Cyclopædia?"

"It's the littherary wontherr of the wurrld," says he; "and sure your lordship must have seen it—the latther numbers ispicially—cheap as durrt, bound in gleezed calico, six shillings a vollum. The illusthrious neems of Walther Scott, Thomas Moore, Docther Southey, Sir James Mackintosh, Docther Donovan, and meself, are to be found in the list of conthributors. It's the Phaynix of Cyclopajies—a litherary Bacon."

"A what?" says the genlmn nex to him.

"A Bacon, shining in the darkness of our age; fild wid the pure end lambent flame of science, burning with the gorrgeous scintillations of divine litherature—a *monumintum*, in fact, *are perinnius*, bound in pink calico, six shillings a vollum."

"This wigmawole," said Mr. Bulwig (who seemed rather disgusted that his friend should take up so much of the con-

vassation), "this wigmawole is all vewy well; but it's cuwious that you don't wemember, in chawactewising the litewawy mewits of the vawious magazines, cwonicles, weviews, and encyclopædias, the existence of a cwitical weview and litewawy chwonicle, which, though the æwa of its appeawance is dated only at a vewy few months pwevious to the pwesent pewiod, is, nevertheless, so wemarkable for its intwinsic mewits as to be wead, not in the metwopolis alone, but in the countwy—not in Fwance merely, but in the west of Euwope—whewever our pure Wenglish is spoken, it stwetches its peaceful sceptre—pewused in Amewica, fwom New York to Niagawa—wepwinted in Canada, fwom Montweal to Towonto—and, as I am gwatified to hear fwom my fwend the Governor of Cape Coast Castle, wegularly weceived in Afwica, and twanslated into the Mandingo language by the missionawies and the bushwangers. I need not say, gentlemen—sir—that is, Mr. Speaker—I mean, Sir John—that I allude to the Litewawy Chwonicle, of which I have the honour to be pwincipal contwibutor."

"Very true, my dear Mr. Bullwig," says my master: "you and I being Whigs, must of course stand by our own friends; and I will agree, without a moment's hesitation, that the Literary what-d'ye-call'em is the prince of periodicals."

"The pwince of pewiodicals?" says Bullwig; "my dear Sir John, it's the empewow of the pwess."

"*Soit*—let it be the emperor of the press, as you poetically call it; but, between ourselves, confess it,—Do not the Tory writers beat your Whigs hollow? You talk about magazines. Look at ——"

"Look at hwat?" shouts out Larder. "There's none, Sir Jan, compared to ourrs."

"Pardon me, I think that——"

"It is 'Bentley's Mislany' you mane?" says Ignatius, as sharp as a niddle.

"Why, no; but——"

"Oh thin, it's Co'burn, sure; and that divvle Thayodor—a pretty paper, sir, but light, thrashy, milk-and-wathery—not sthrong, like the Litherary Chran—good luck to it."

"Why, Doctor Lander, I was going to tell at once the name of the periodical. It is FRASER'S MAGAZINE."

"FRESER!" says the Doctor. "O thunder and turf!"

"FWASER!" says Bullwig. "O—ah—hum—haw—yes—no—why, that is weally—no, weally, upon my weputation, I never before heard the name of the pewiodical. By-the-bye, Sir John, what wemarkable good clawet that is; is it Lawose or Laff——"

Laff, indeed! he cooden git beyond laff; and I'm blest if I could kip it neither,—for hearing him pretend ignurnts, and being behind the skreend, settlin sumthink for the genlmn, I bust into such a raw of laffing as never was igseeded.

"Hullo!" says Bullwig, turning red. "Have I said anything impwobable, aw widiculous? for weally, I never befaw wecollect to have heard in society such a twemendous peal of cachinnation—that which the twagic bard who fought at Mawathon has called an *anewithmon gelasma*."

"Why, be the holy piper," says Larder, "I think you are dthrawing a little on your imagination. Not read *Fraser!*—Don't believe him, my lord duke; he reads every word of it, the rogue! The boys about that magazine baste him as if he was a sack of oatmale. My reason for crying out, Sir Jan, was because you mintioned *Fraser* at all. Bullwig has every syllable of it be heart—from the paillitix down to the 'Yellowplush Correspondence.'"

"Ha, ha!" says Bullwig, affecting to laff (you may be sure my years prickt up when I heard the name of the 'Yellowplush Correspondence'). "Ha, ha! why, to tell twuth, I *have* wead the cowespondence to which you allude: it's a gweat favowite at court. I was talking with Spwing Wice and John Wussell about it the other day."

"Well, and what do you think of it?" says Sir John, looking mity waggish, for he knew it was me who roat it.

"Why, weally and twuly, there's considewable cleverness about the cweature; but it's low, disgustingly low: it violates pwobability, and the orthogwaphy is so carefully inaccuwate, that it requires a positive study to compwehend it."

"Yes, faith," says Larner; "the arthagraphy is detestible; it's as bad for a man to write bad spillin as it is for 'em to speak wid a brrogue. Iducation furst, and ganius afterwards. Your health, my lord, and good luck to you."

"Yaw wemark," says Bullwig, "is vewy appwopwiate. You will wecollect, Sir John, in Hewodotus (as for you, Doctor, you know more about Iwish than about Gweek)—you will wecollect, without doubt, a stowy nawwated by that cwedulous though fascinating chwonicler, of a certain kind of sheep which is known only in a certain distwict of Awabia, and of which the tail is so enormous, that it either dwaggles on the gwound, or is bound up by the shepherds of the country into a small wheelbawwow, or cart, which makes the chwonicler sneewingly wemark that thus 'the sheep of Awabia have their own chawiots.' I have often thought, sir (this clawet is weally nectaweous)—I have often, I say, thought that the wace of man may be compawed to these Awabian sheep—genius is our tail, education our wheelbawwow. Without art and education to pwop it, this genius dwops on the gwound, and is polluted by the mud, or injured by the wocks upon the way; with the wheelbawwow it is stwengthened, incweased, and supported—a pwide to the owner, a blessing to mankind."

"A very appropriate simile," says Sir John; "and I am afraid that the genius of our friend Yellowplush has need of some such support."

"Apropos," said Bullwig, "who *is* Yellowplush? I was given to understand that the name was only a fictitious one, and that the papers were written by the author of the 'Diary of a Physician;' if so, the man has wonderfully improved in style, and there is some hope of him."

"Bah!" says the Duke of Doublejowl; "every body knows it's Barnard, the celebrated author of 'Sam Slick.'"

"Pardon, my dear duke," says Lord Bagwig; "it's the authoress of 'High Life,' 'Almack's,' and other fashionable novels."

"Fiddlestick's end!" says Doctor Larner; "don't be blushing and pretinding to ask questions. Don't we know you, Bullwig? It's you yourself, you thief of the world; we smoked you from the very beginning."

Bullwig was about indignantly to reply, when Sir John interrupted them, and said, "I must correct you all, gentlemen; Mr. Yellowplush is no other than Mr. Yellowplush. He gave you, my dear Bullwig, your last glass of champagne

at dinner, and is now an inmate of my house, and an ornament of my kitchen!"

"Gad!" says Doublejowl, "let's have him up."

"Hear, hear!" says Bagwig.

"Ah, now," says Larner, "your grace is not going to call up and talk to a footman, sure? Is it gintale?"

"To say the least of it," says Bullwig, "the pwactice is iwwegular, and indecowous; and I weally don't see how the interview can be in any way pwofitable."

But the vices of the company went against the two littery men, and everybody excep them was for having up poor me. The bell was wrung; butler came. "Send up Charles," says master; and Charles, who was standing behind the skreand, was persnly abliged to come in.

"Charles," says master, "I have been telling these gentlemen who is the author of the 'Yellowplush Correspondence' in *Fraser's Magazine*."

"It's the best magazine in Europe," says the duke.

"And no mistake," says my lord.

"Hwat!" says Larner; "and where's the Litherary Chran?"

I said myself nothink, but made a bough, and blusht like pickle-cabbitch.

"Mr. Yellowplush," says his grace, "will you, in the first place, drink a glass of wine?"

I boughed agin.

"And what wine do you prefer, sir? humble port or imperial burgundy?"

"Why, your grace," says I, "I know my place, and ain't above kitchin wines. I will take a glass of port, and drink it to the health of this honrabble company."

When I'd swigged off the bumper, which his grace himself did me the honour to pour out for me, there was a silints for a minnit; when my master said,—

"Charles Yellowplush, I have perused your memoirs in *Fraser's Magazine* with so much curiosity, and have so high an opinion of your talents as a writer, that I really cannot keep you as a footman any longer, or allow you to discharge duties for which you are now quite unfit. With all my admiration for your talents, Mr. Yellowplush, I still am con-

fident that many of your friends in the servants'-hall will clean my boots a great deal better than a gentleman of your genius can ever be expected to do. It is for this purpose I employ footmen, and not that they may be writing articles in magazines. But—you need not look so red, my good fellow, and had better take another glass of port—I don't wish to throw you upon the wide world without the means of a livelihood, and have made interest for a little place which you will have under Government, and which will give you an income of eighty pounds per annum; which you can double, I presume, by your literary labours."

"Sir," says I, clasping my hands, and busting into tears, "do not—for Heaven's sake, do not!—think of any such think, or drive me from your suvvice, because I have been fool enough to write in magaseens. Glans but one moment at your honor's plate—every spoon is as bright as a mirror; condysend to igsamine your shoes—your honour may see reflected in them the fases of every one in the company. *I* blacked them shoes, *I* cleaned that there plate. If occasionally I've forgot the footman in the litterary man, and committed to paper my remindicences of fashnabble life, it was from a sincere desire to do good, and promote nollitch; and I appeal to your honour—I lay my hand on my busm, and in the fase of this noble company beg you to say, When you rung your bell, who came to you fust? When you stopt out at Brooke's till morning, who sat up for you? When you was ill, who forgot the natral dignities of his station, and answered the two-pair bell? Oh, sir," says I, "I know what's what; don't send me away. I know them littery chaps, and, beleave me, I'd rather be a footman. The work's not so hard, the pay is better, the vittels incompyrably supearor. I have but to clean my things, and run my errints, and you put clothes on my back, and meat in my mouth. —Sir! Mr. Bullwig! an't I right? shall I quit *my* station and sink—that is to say, rise—to *yours?*"

Bullwig was violently affected; a tear stood in his glistening i. "Yellowplush," says he, seizing my hand, "you *are* right. Quit not your present occupation; black boots, clean knives, wear plush, all your life, but don't turn literary man. Look at me. I am the first novelist in Europe. I have

ranged with eagle wing over the wide regions of literature, and perched on every eminence in its turn. I have gazed with eagle eyes on the sun of philosophy, and fathomed the mysterious depths of the human mind. All languages are familiar to me, all thoughts are known to me, all men understood by me. I have gathered wisdom from the honeyed lips of Plato, as we wandered in the gardens of Acadames—wisdom, too, from the mouth of Job Johnson, as we smoked our 'backy in Seven Dials. Such must be the studies, and such is the mission, in this world, of the Poet-Philosopher. But the knowledge is only emptiness; the initiation is but misery; the initiated, a man shunned and bann'd by his fellows. Oh," said Bullwig, clasping his hands, and throwing his fine i's up to the chandelier, "the curse of Pwometheus descends upon his wace. Wath and punishment pursue them from genewation to genewation! Wo to genius, the heaven-scaler, the fire-stealer! Wo and thrice bitter desolation! Earth is the wock on which Zeus, wemorseless, stwetches his withing victim—men, the vultures that feed and fatten on him. Ai, Ai! it is agony eternal—gwoaning and solitawy despair! And you, Yellowplush, would penetwate these mystewies; you would waise the awful veil, and stand in the twemendous Pwesence. Beware; as you value your peace, beware! Withdwaw, wash Neophyte! For Heaven's sake, O for Heaven's sake!"—here he looked round with agony—"give me a glass of bwandy-and-water, for this clawet is beginning to disagwee with me."

Bullwig having concluded this spitch, very much to his own sattasfackshn, looked round to the compny for aplaws, and then swigged off the glass of brandy-and-water, giving a sollum sigh as he took the last gulph; and then Doctor Ignatius, who longed for a chans, and, in order to show his independence, began flatly contradicting his friend, addressed me, and the rest of the genlmn present, in the following manner:—

"Hark ye," says he, "my gossoon, doan't be led asthray by the nonsinse of that divil of a Bullwig. He's jillous of ye, my bhoy—that's the rale, undoubted thruth; and it's only to keep you out of litherary life that he's palavering you in this way. I'll tell you what—Plush, ye blackguard—my

honourable frind the mimber there has told me a hunder times, by the smallest computation, of his intense admiration of your talents, and the wonderful sthir they were making in the worlld. He can't bear a rival. He's mad with envy, hatred, oncharatableness. Look at him, Plush, and look at me. My father was not a juke exactly, nor aven a markis, and see, nevertheliss, to what a pitch I am come. I spare no ixpinse; I'm the iditor of a cople of pariodicals; I dthrive about in me carridge; I dine wid the lords of the land; and why—in the name of the piper that pleed before Mosus, hwy? Because I'm litherary man. Because I know how to play me cards. Because I'm Docther Larner, in fact, and mimber of every society in and out of Europe. I might have remained all my life in Thrinity Colledge, and never made such an incom as that offered you by Sir Jan; but I came to London—to London, my boy—and now see! Look again at me friend Bullwig. He *is* a gentleman, to be sure, and bad luck to 'im, say I; and what has been the result of his litherary labour? I'll tell you what; and I'll tell this gintale society, by the shade of Saint Patrick, they're going to make him A BARINET."

"A BARNET, Doctor!" says I; "you don't mean to say they're going to make him a barnet!"

"As sure as I've made meself a docthor," says Larner.

"What, a baronet, like Sir John?"

"The divle a bit else."

"And pray what for?"

"What faw?" says Bullwig. "Ask the histowy of litwatuwe what faw? Ask Colburn, ask Bentley, ask Saunders and Otley, ask the gweat Bwitish nation, what faw? The blood in my veins comes puwified thwough ten thousand years of chivalwous ancestwy; but that is neither here nor there: my political principles—the equal wights which I have advocated—the gweat cause of fweedom that I have celebwated, are known to all. But this, I confess, has nothing to do with the question. No, the question is this—on the thwone of litewature I stand unwivalled, pwe-eminent; and the Bwitish government, honowing genius in me, compliments the Bwitish nation by lifting into the bosom of the heweditawy nobility the most gifted member of the democ-

wacy." (The honrabble genlm here sunk down amidst repeated cheers.)

"Sir John," says I, "and my lord duke, the words of my rivrint friend Ignatius, and the remarks of the honrabble genlmn who has just sate down, have made me change the detummination which I had the honor of igspressing just now.

"I igsept the eighty pound a year; knowing that I shall have plenty of time for pursuing my littery career, and hoping some day to set on that same bentch of barranites, which is deckarated by the presnts of my honrabble friend.

"Why shooden I? It's trew I ain't done anythink as *yet* to deserve such an honour; and it's very probable that I never shall. But what then?—*quaw dong*, as our friends say? I'd much rayther have a coat-of-arms than a coat of livry. I'd much rayther have my blud-red hand spralink in the middle of a shield, than underneath a tea-tray. A barranit I will be; and, in consiquints, must cease to be a footmin.

"As to my politticle princepills, these, I confess, ain't settled; they are, I know, necessary; but they ain't necessary *until askt for;* besides, I reglar read the *Sattarist* newspaper, and so ignirince on this pint would be inigscusable.

"But if one man can git to be a doctor, and another a barranit, and another a capting in the navy, and another *a* countess, and another the wife of a governor of the Cape of Good Hope, I begin to perseave that the littery trade ain't such a very bad un; igspecially if you're up to snough, and know what's o'clock. I'll learn to make myself usefle, in the fust place; then I'll larn to spell; and, I trust, by reading the novvles of the honrabble member, and the scientafick treatiseses of the reverend doctor, I may find the secrit of suxess, and git a litell for my own share. I've sevral frends in the press, having paid for many of those chaps' drink, and given them other treets; and so I think I've got all the emilents of suxess; therefore, I am detummined, as I said, to igsept your kind offer, and beg to withdraw the wuds which I made yous of when I refyoused your hoxpatable offer. I must, however——"

"I wish you'd withdraw yourself," said Sir John, busting

into a most igstrorinary rage, "and not interrupt the company with your infernal talk! Go down, and get us coffee; and, heark ye! hold your impertinent tongue, or I'll break every bone in your body. You shall have the place, as I said; and while you're in my service, you shall be my servant; but you don't stay in my service after to-morrow. Go downstairs, sir; and don't stand staring here!"

* * * * *

In this abrupt way, my evening ended. It's with a melancholy regret that I think what came of it. I don't wear plush any more. I am an altered, a wiser, and, I trust, a better man.

I'm about a novvle (having made great progriss in spelling), in the style of my friend Bullwig; and preparing for publigation, in the Doctor's Cyclopedear, "The Lives of Eminent Brittish and Foring Washerwomen."

SKIMMINGS FROM "THE DAIRY OF GEORGE IV."

CHARLES YELLOWPLUSH, ESQ., TO OLIVER YORKE, ESQ.*

DEAR WHY,—Takin advantage of the Crismiss holydays, Sir John and me (who is a member of parlyment) had gone down to our place in Yorkshire for six wicks, to shoot grows and woodcox, and enjoy old English hospatalaty. This ugly Canady bisniss unluckaly put an end to our sports in the country, and brot us up to Buckly Square as fast as four posterses could gallip. When there, I found your parcel, containing the two vollumes of a new book; witch, as I have been away from the literary world, and emplied solely in athlatic exorcises, have been laying neglected in my pantry, among my knife-cloaths, and dekanters, and blacking-bottles, and bedroom candles, and things.

This will, I'm sure, account for my delay in notussing the work. I see sefral of the papers and magazeens have been

* These Memoirs were originally published in *Fraser's Magazine*, and it may be stated, for the benefit of the unlearned in such matters, that "Oliver Yorke" is the assumed name of the editor of that periodical.

befoarhand with me, and have given their apinions concerning it; specially the *Quotly Revew*, which has most mussilessly cut to peases the author of this *Dairy of the Times of George IV.**

That it's a woman who wrote it is evydent from the style of the writing, as well as from certain proofs in the book itself. Most suttnly a femail wrote this *Dairy;* but who this *Dairy-maid* may be, I, in coarse, can't conjecter, and indeed common galliantry forbids me to ask. I can only judge of the book itself, which, it appears to me, is clearly trenching upon my ground and favrite subjicks—viz. fashnabble life, as igsibited in the houses of the nobility, gentry, and rile fammly.

But I bare no mallis—infamation is infamation, and it doesn't matter where the infamy comes from; and whether the *Dairy* be from that distinguished pen to witch it is ornarily attributed—whether, I say, it comes from a lady of honor to the late quean, or a scullion to that diffunct majisty—no matter: all we ask is nollidge; never mind how we have it. Nollidge, as our cook says, is like trikel-possit—it's always good, though you was to drink it out of an old shoo.

Well, then, although this *Dairy* is likely searusly to injur my pussonal intrests, by fourstalling a deal of what I had to say in my private memoars; though many, many guineas is taken from my pockit, by cuttin short the tail of my narratif; though much that I had to say in souperior languidge, greased with all the ellygance of my orytory, the benefick of my classicle reading, the chawms of my agreble wit, is thus abruply brot befor the world by an inferior genus, neither knowing nor writing English; yet I say, that nevertheless I must say, what I am pufficklY prepaired to say, to gainsay which no man can say a word—yet I say, that I say I consider this publication welkom. Far from viewing it with enfy, I greet it with applaws; because it increases that most

* *Diary illustrative of the Times of George the Fourth, interspersed with Original Letters from the late Queen Caroline, and from various other distinguished Persons.*

"Tôt ou tard, tout se sçait."—MAINTENON.

In 2 vols. London, 1838. Henry Colburn.

exlent specious of nollidge, I mean "FASHNABBLE NOLLIDGE," compayred to witch all other nollidge is nonsince —a bag of goold to a pare of snuffers.

Could Lord Broom, on the Canady question, say moar? or say what he had to say better? We are marters, both of us, to prinsple; and every body who knows eather knows that we would sacrafice anythink rather than that. Fashion is the goddiss I adoar. This delightful work is an offring on her srine; and as sich all her wushippers are bound to hail it. Here is not a question of trumpry lords and honrabbles, generals and barronites, but the crown itself, and the king and queen's actions; witch may be considered as the crown jewels. Here's princes, and grand-dukes and airsparent, and Heaven knows what; all with blood-royal in their veins, and their names mentioned in the very fust page of the peeridge. In this book you become so intmate with the Prince of Wales, that you may follow him, if you please, to his marridge-bed; or, if you prefer the Princiss Charlotte, you may have with her an hour's tator-tator.*

Now, though most of the remarkable extrax from this book have been given already (the cream of the *Dairy*, as I wittily say), I shall trouble you, nevertheless, with a few; partly because they can't be repeated too often, and because the toan of obsyvation with witch they have been genrally received by the press is not igsackly such as I think they merit. How, indeed, can these common magaseen and newspaper pipple know anythink of fashnabble life, let alone ryal?

Conseaving, then, that the publication of the *Dairy* has done reel good on this scoar, and may probly do a deal moor, I shall look through it, for the porpus of selecting the most ellygant passidges, and which I think may be peculiarly adapted to the reader's benefick.

For you see, my dear Mr. Yorke, that in the fust place, that this is no common catchpny book, like that of most authors and authoresses who write for the base looker of gain. Heaven bless you! the Dairy-maid is above anything musnary. She is a woman of rank, and no mistake; and is as much above doin a common or vulgar action as I am

* Our estimable correspondent means, we presume, *tête-à-tête*.—O. Y.

superaor to taking beer after dinner with my cheese. She proves that most satisfackarily, as we see in the following passidge :—

"Her royal highness came to me, and having spoken a few phrases on different subjects, produced all the papers she wishes to have published—her whole correspondence with the prince relative to Lady J——'s dismissal; his subsequent neglect of the princess; and, finally, the acquittal of her supposed guilt, signed by the Duke of Portland, etc., at the time of the secret inquiry, when, if proof could have been brought against her, it certainly would have been done; and which acquittal, to the disgrace of all parties concerned, as well as to the justice of the nation in general, was not made public at the time. A common criminal is publicly condemned or acquitted. Her royal highness commanded me to have these letters published forthwith, saying, 'You may sell them for a great sum.' At first (for she had spoken to me before concerning this business) I thought of availing myself of the opportunity; but upon second thoughts, I turned from this idea with detestation: for if I do wrong by obeying her wishes and endeavouring to serve her, I will do so at least from good and disinterested motives, not from any sordid views. The princess commands me, and I will obey her, whatever may be the issue; but not for fare or fee. I own I tremble, not so much for myself as for the idea that she is not taking the best and most dignified way of having these papers published. Why make a secret of it at all? If wrong, it should not be done; if right, it should be done openly, and in the face of her enemies. In her royal highness's case, as in that of wronged princes in general, why do they shrink from straightforward dealings, and rather have recourse to crooked policy? I wish, in this particular instance, I could make her royal highness feel thus; but she is naturally indignant at being falsely accused, and will not condescend to an avowed explanation."

Can anythink be more just and honrabble than this? The Dairy-lady is quite fair and abovebored. A clear stage, says she, and no faviour! "I won't do behind my back what I

am ashamed of before my face—not I!" No more she does; for you see that, though she was offered this manyscrip by the princess *for nothink*, though she knew that she could actially get for it a large sum of money, she was above it, like an honest, noble, grateful, fashnabble woman, as she was. She aboars secrecy, and never will have recors to disguise or crookid polacy. This ought to be an ansure to them *Radicle sneerers*, who pretend that they are the equals of fashnabble pepple; whereas it's a well-known fact that the vulgar roagues have no notion of honour.

And after this positif declaration, which reflex honor on her ladyship (long life to her! I've often waited behind her chair!)—after this positif declaration that, even for the porpus of *defending* her missis, she was so hi-minded as to refuse anythink like a peculiarly consideration, it is actially asserted in the public prints, by a booxeller, that he has given her *a thousand pound* for the *Dairy*. A thousand pound! nonsince!—it's a phigment, a base lible! This woman take a thousand pound, in a matter where her dear mistriss, frend, and benyfactriss was concerned! Never! A thousand baggonits would be more prefrabble to a woman of her xqizzit feelins and fashion.

But to proseed. It's been objected to me, when I wrote some of my expearunces in fashnabble life, that my languidge was occasionally vulgar, and not such as is generally used in those xquizzit famlies which I frequent. Now, I'll lay a wager that there is in this book, wrote, as all the world knows, by a rele lady, and speakin of kings and queens as if they were as common as sand-boys—there is in this book more wulgarity than ever I displayed, more nastiness than ever I would dare *to think on*, and more bad grammar than ever I wrote since I was a boy at school. As for authografy, evry genlmn has his own: never mind spellin, I say, so long as the sence is right.

Let me here quot a letter from a corryspondent of this charming lady of honour; and a very nice corryspondent he is, too, without any mistake:—

"Lady O——, poor Lady O——, knows the rules of prudence, I fear me, as imperfectly as she doth those of the

Greek and Latin Grammars; or she hath let her brother, who is a sad swine, become master of her secrets, and then contrived to quarrel with him. You would see the outline of the *mélange* in the newspapers; but not the report that Mr. S—— is about to publish a pamphlet, as an addition to the Harleian Tracts, setting forth the amatory adventures of his sister. We shall break our necks in haste to buy it, of course crying 'Shameful' all the while; and it is said that Lady O—— is to be cut, which I cannot entirely believe. Let her tell two or three old women about town that they are young and handsome, and give some well-timed parties, and she may still keep the society which she hath been used to. The times are not so hard as they once were, when a woman could not construe Magna Charta with anything like impunity. People were full as gallant many years ago. But the days are gone by wherein my lord-protector of the commonwealth of England was wont to go a love-making to Mrs. Fleetwood, with the Bible under his arm.

"And so Miss Jacky Gordon is really clothed with a husband at last, and Miss Laura Manners left without a mate! She and Lord Stair should marry and have children, in mere revenge. As to Miss Gordon, she's a Venus well suited for such a Vulcan—whom nothing but money and a title could have rendered tolerable, even to a kitchen wench. It is said that the matrimonial correspondence between this couple is to be published, full of sad scandalous relations, of which you may be sure scarcely a word is true. In former times, the Duchess of St. A——s made use of these elegant epistles in order to intimidate Lady Johnstone; but that *ruse* would not avail, so in spite they are to be printed. What a cargo of amiable creatures! Yet will some people scarcely believe in the existence of Pandemonium.

"*Tuesday Morning.*—You are perfectly right respecting the hot rooms here, which we all cry out against, and all find very comfortable—much more so than the cold sands and bleak neighbourhood of the sea; which looks vastly well in one of Vander Velde's pictures hung upon crimson damask, but hideous and shocking in reality. H—— and his '*elle*' (talking of parties) were last night at Cholmondeley House, but seem not to ripen in their love. He is certainly good-

humoured, and I believe good-hearted, so deserves a good wife; but his *cara* seems a genuine London miss, made up of many affectations. Will she form a comfortable helpmate? For me, I like not her origin, and deem many strange things to run in blood, besides madness and the Hanoverian evil.

"*Thursday.*—I verily do believe that I shall never get to the end of this small sheet of paper, so many unheard-of interruptions have I had; and now I have been to Vauxhall, and caught the toothache. I was of Lady E. B——m and H——'s party: very dull—the Lady giving us all a supper after our promenade—

> 'Much ado was there, God wot
> She would love, but he would not.'

He ate a great deal of ice, although he did not seem to require it; and she '*faisoit les yeux doux*' enough not only to have melted all the ice which he swallowed, but his own hard heart into the bargain. The thing will not do. In the meantime, Miss Long hath become quite cruel to Wellesley Pole, and divides her favour equally between Lords Killeen and Kilworth, two as simple Irishmen as ever gave birth to a bull. I wish to Hymen that she were fairly married, for all this pother gives one a disgusting picture of human nature."

A disgusting pictur of human nature, indeed! and isn't he who moralises about it, and she to whom he writes, a couple of pretty heads in the same piece? Which, Mr. Yorke, is the wust—the scandle or the scandle-mongers? See what it is to be a moral man of fashn. Fust, he scrapes togither all the bad stoaries about all the people of his acquentance; he goes to a ball, and laffs or snears at everybody there; he is asked to a dinner, and brings away, along with meat and wine to his heart's content, a sour stomick filled with nasty stories of all the people present there. He has such a squeamish appytite that all the world seems to *disagree* with him. And what has he got to say to his dellicate female frend? Why, that—

Fust. Mr. S. is going to publish indescent stoaries about Lady O——, his sister, which everybody's goin to by.

Nex. That Miss Gordon is going to be cloathed with an

usband; and that all their matrimonial corryspondins is to be published too.

3. That Lord H. is goin to be married; but there's something rong in his wife's blood.

4. Miss Long has cut Mr. Wellesley, and is gone after two Irish lords.

Wooden you phancy, now, that the author of such a letter, instead of writin about pipple of tip-top qualaty, was describin Vinegar Yard? Would you beleave that the lady he was a-ritin to was a chased, modist lady of honour, and mother of a famly? *O trumpery! O morris!* as Homer says: this is a higeous pictur of manners, such as I weap to think of, as evry morl man must weap.

The above is one pritty pictur of mearly fashnabble life; what follows is about families even higher situated than the most fashnabble. Here we have the princessregient, her daughter the Princess Sharlot, her grandmamma the old quean, and her madjisty's daughters the two princesses. If this is not high life, I don't know where it is to be found; and it's pleasing to see what affeckshn and harmny rains in such an exolted spear.

"*Sunday, 24th.*—Yesterday, the Princess went to meet the Princess Charlotte at Kensington. Lady —— told me that, when the latter arrived, she rushed up to her mother, and said, 'For God's sake, be civil to her,' meaning the Duchess of Leeds, who followed her. Lady —— said she felt sorry for the latter; but when the Princess of Wales talked to her, she soon became so free and easy that one could not have any *feeling* about her *feelings*. Princess Charlotte, I was told, was looking handsome, very pale, but her head more becomingly dressed—that is to say, less dressed than usual. Her figure is of that full round shape which is now in its prime; but she disfigures herself by wearing her bodice so short that she literally has no waist. Her feet are very pretty; and so are her hands and arms, and her ears, and the shape of her head. Her countenance is expressive, when she allows her passions to play upon it; and I never saw any face, with so little shade, express so many powerful and varied emotions. Lady —— told me that the Princess Charlotte

talked to her about her situation, and said, in a very quiet but determined way, she *would not bear it*, and that as soon as parliament met, she intended to come to Warwick House, and remain there; that she was also determined not to consider the Duchess of Leeds as her *governess*, but only as her *first lady*. She made many observations on other persons and subjects; and appears to be very quick, very penetrating, but imperious and wilful. There is a tone of romance, too, in her character, which will only serve to mislead her.

"She told her mother that there had been a great battle at Windsor between the queen and the prince, the former refusing to give up Miss Knight from her own person to attend on Princess Charlotte as sub-governess. But the prince-regent had gone to Windsor himself, and insisted on her doing so; and the 'old Beguin' was forced to submit, but has been ill ever since: and Sir Henry Halford declared it was a complete breaking up of her constitution—to the great delight of the two princesses, who were talking about this affair. Miss Knight was the very person they wished to have; they think they can do as they like with her. It has been ordered that the Princess Charlotte should not see her mother alone for a single moment; but the latter went into her room, stuffed a pair of large shoes full of papers, and having given them to her daughter, she went home. Lady —— told me everything was written down, and sent to Mr. Brougham *next day*."

See what diskcord will creap even into the best regulated famlies. Here are six of 'em—viz., the quean and her two daughters, her son, and his wife and daughter; and the manner in which they hate one another is a compleat puzzle.

The Prince hates..... { his mother. his wife. his daughter.

Princess Charlotte hates her father.

Princess of Wales hates her husband.

The old quean, by their squobbles, is on the pint of death; and her two jewtiful daughters are delighted at the news. What a happy, fashnabble, Christian famly! O Mr. Yorke,

Mr. Yorke, if this is the way in the drawin-rooms, I'm quite content to live below in pease and charaty with all men—writin, as I am now, in my pantry, or els havin a quite game at cards in the servants-all. With *us* there's no bitter, wicked quarling of this sort. *We* don't hate our children, or bully our mothers, or wish 'em ded when they're sick, as this Dairy-woman says kings and queans do. When we're writing to our friends or sweethearts, *we* don't fill our letters with nasty stoaries, takin away the carricter of our fellow-servants, as this maid of honour's amusin moral frend does. But, in coarse, it's not for us to judge of our betters; these great people are a supearur race, and we can't comprehend their ways.

Do you recklect—it's twenty years ago now—how a bewtiffle princess died in givin buth to a poar baby, and how the whole nation of Hengland wep, as though it was one man, over that sweet woman and child, in which were sentered the hopes of every one of us, and of which each was as proud as of his own wife or infnt? Do you recklect how pore fellows spent their last shillin to buy a black crape for their hats, and clergymen cried in the pulpit, and the whole country through was no better than a great dismal funeral? Do you recklect, Mr. Yorke, who was the person that we all took on so about? We called her the Princis Sharlot of Wales; and we valyoud a single drop of her blood more than the whole heartless body of her father. Well, we looked up to her as a kind of saint or angle, and blest God (such foolish, loyal English pipple as we ware in those days), who had sent this sweet lady to rule over us. But Heaven bless you! it was only souperstition. She was no better than she should be, as it turns out—or at least the Dairy-maid says so. No better?—if my daughters or yours was ½ so bad, we'd as leaf be dead ourselves, and they hanged. But listen to this pritty charritable story, and a truce to reflexshuns:—

"*Sunday, January* 9, 1814.—Yesterday, according to appointment, I went to Princess Charlotte. Found at Warwick House the harp-player, Dizzi; was asked to remain and listen to his performance, but was talked to during the whole time, which completely prevented all possibility of listening to the music. The Duchess of Leeds and her

daughter were in the room, but left it soon. Next arrived Miss Knight, who remained all the time I was there. Princess Charlotte was very gracious—showed me all her *bonny dyes*, as B—— would have called them—pictures, and cases, and jewels, etc. She talked in a very desultory way, and it would be difficult to say of what. She observed her mother was in very low spirits. I asked her how she supposed she could be otherwise. This *questioning* answer saves a great deal of trouble, and serves two purposes—*i.e.*, avoids committing oneself, or giving offence by silence. There was hung in the apartment one portrait, amongst others, that very much resembled the Duke of D——. I asked Miss Knight whom it represented. She said that was not known; it had been supposed a likeness of the Pretender when young. This answer suited my thoughts so comically I could have laughed, if one ever did at courts anything but the contrary of what one was inclined to do.

"Princess Charlotte has a very great variety of expression in her countenance—a play of features and a force of muscle rarely seen in connection with such soft and shadeless colouring. Her hands and arms are beautiful; but I think her figure is already gone, and will soon be precisely like her mother's; in short, it is the very picture of her, and *not in miniature*. I could not help analyzing my own sensations during the time I was with her, and thought more of them than I did of her. Why was I at all flattered, at all more amused, at all more supple to this young princess, than to her who is only the same sort of person set in the shade of circumstances and of years? It is that youth, and the approach of power, and the latent views of self-interest, sway the heart and dazzle the understanding. If this is so with a heart not, I trust, corrupt, and a head not particularly formed for interested calculations, what effect must not the same causes produce on the generality of mankind?

"In the course of the conversation, the Princess Charlotte contrived to edge in a good deal of *tum-de-dy*, and would, if I had entered into the thing, have gone on with it, while looking at a little picture of herself, which had about thirty or forty different dresses to put over it, done on *isinglass*, and which allowed the general colouring of the picture to be seen

through its transparency. It was, I thought, a pretty enough conceit, though rather like dressing up a doll. 'Ah!' said Miss Knight, 'I am not content though, madame; for I yet should have liked one more dress—that of the favourite Sultana.'

"'No, no!' said the princess, 'I never was a favourite, and never can be one,'—looking at a picture which she said was her father's, but which I do not believe was done for the regent any more than for me, but represented a young man in a hussar's dress—probably a former favourite.

"The Princess Charlotte seemed much hurt at the little notice that was taken of her birthday. After keeping me for two hours and a half she dismissed me; and I am sure I could not say what she said, except that it was an *olio* of *déconsus* and heterogeneous things, partaking of the characteristics of her mother, grafted on a younger scion. I dined *tête-à-tête* with my dear old aunt: hers is always a sweet and soothing society to me."

There's a pleasing, lady-like, moral extrack for you! An innocent young thing of fifteen has picturs of *two* lovers in her room, and expex a good number more. This dellygate young creature *edges* in a good deal of *tumdedy* (I can't find it in Johnson's Dixonary), and would have *gone on with the thing* (ellygence of languidge) if the dairy-lady would have let her.

Now, to tell you the truth, Mr. Yorke, I doan't beleave a single syllible of this story. This lady of honner says, in the fust place, that the princess would have talked a good deal of *tumdedy*—which means, I suppose, indeasnsy—if she, the lady of honner, *would have let her*. This *is* a good one! Why, she lets every body else talk tumdedy to their hearts' content; she lets her friends *write* tumdedy, and, after keeping it for a quarter of a sentry, she *prints* it. Why, then, be so squeamish about *hearing* a little? And then there's the stoary of the two portricks. This woman has the honner to be received in the frendlyest manner by a British princess; and what does the grateful loyal creature do? 2 picturs of the princess's relations are hanging in her room, and the Dairy-woman swears away the poor young princess's carrickter, by swearing they are picturs of her *lovers*. For shame, oh,

for shame, you slanderin backbitin dairy-woman you! If you told all them things to your "dear old aunt," on going to dine with her, you must have had very "sweet and soothing society" indeed.

I had marked out many moar extrax, which I intended to write about; but I think I have said enough about this Dairy: in fack, the butler, and the gals in the servants'-hall, are not well pleased that I should go on readin this naughty book; so we'll have no more of it, only one passidge about Pollytics, witch is sertnly quite new:—

"No one was so likely to be able to defeat Bonaparte as the Crown Prince, from the intimate knowledge he possessed of his character. Bernadotte was also instigated against Bonaparte by one who not only owed him a personal hatred, but who possessed a mind equal to his, and who gave the Crown Prince both information and advice how to act. This was no less a person than Madame de Stäel. It was not, as some have asserted, *that she was in love with Bernadotte;* for, at the time of their intimacy, *Madame de Stäel was in love with Rocca.* But she used her influence (which was not small) with the Crown Prince to make him fight against Bonaparte, and to her wisdom may be attributed much of the success which accompanied his attack upon him. Bernadotte has raised the flame of liberty, which seems fortunately to blaze all around. May it liberate Europe; and from the ashes of the laurel may olive branches spring up, and overshadow the earth!"

There's a discuvery—that the overthrow of Boneypart is owing to *Madame de Stäel!* What nonsince for Colonel Southey or Doctor Napier to write histories of the war with that Capsican hupstart and murderer, when here we have the whole affair explaned by the lady of honour!

Sunday, April 10, 1814.—The incidents which take place every hour are miraculous. Bonaparte is deposed, but alive; subdued, but allowed to choose his place of residence. The island of Elba is the spot he has selected for his ignominious retreat. France is holding forth repentant arms to her

banished sovereign. The Poissardes who dragged Louis XVI. to the scaffold are presenting flowers to the Emperor of Russia, the restorer of their legitimate king! What a stupendous field for philosophy to expatiate in! What an endless material for thought! What humiliation to the pride of mere human greatness! How are the mighty fallen! Of all that was great in Napoleon, what remains? Despoiled of his usurped power, he sinks to insignificance. There was no moral greatness in the man. The meteor dazzled, scorched, is put out—utterly, and for ever. But the power which rests in those who have delivered the nations from bondage is a power that is delegated to them from heaven, and the manner in which they have used it is a guarantee for its continuance. The Duke of Wellington has gained laurels unstained by any useless flow of blood. He has done more than conquer others—he has conquered himself; and in the midst of the blaze and flush of victory, surrounded by the homage of nations, he has not been betrayed into the commission of any act of cruelty or wanton offence. He was as cool and self-possessed under the blaze and dazzle of fame as a common man would be under the shade of his garden-tree, or by the hearth of his home. But the tyrant who kept Europe in awe is now a pitiable object for scorn to point the finger of derision at; and humanity shudders as it remembers the scourge with which this man's ambition was permitted to devastate every home tie and every heartfelt joy."

And now, after this sublime passidge, as full of awfle reflections and pious sentyments as those of Mrs. Cole in the play, I shall only quot one little extrak more:—

"All goes gloomily with the poor princess. Lady Charlotte Campbell told me she regrets not seeing all these curious personages; but she says the more the princess is forsaken, the more happy she is at having offered to attend her at this time. *This is very amiable in her*, and cannot fail to be gratifying to the princess."

So it is—wery amiable, wery kind and considdrate in her, indeed. Poor Princess! how lucky you was to find a frend

who loved you for your own sake, and when all the rest of the wuld turned its back kep steady to you. As for beleaving that Lady Sharlot had any hand in this book,* Heaven forbid! she is all gratitude, pure gratitude, depend upon it. *She* would not go for to blacken her old frend and patron's carrickter, after having been so outragusly faithful to her; *she* wouldn't do it, at no price, depend upon it. How sorry she must be that others an't quite so squemish, and show up in this indesent way the follies of her kind, genrus, foolish bennyfactris!

EPISTLES TO THE LITERATI.

CH—S Y-LL-WPL-SH, ESQ., TO SIR EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, BT.
JOHN THOMAS SMITH, ESQ., TO C—S Y———H, ESQ.

NOTUS.

THE suckmstansies of the following harticle are as follos:—Me and my friend, the sellabrated Mr. Smith, reckonised each other in the Haymarket Theatre, during the performints of the new play. I was settn in the gallery, and sung out to him (he was in the pit) to jine us after the play, over a glass of bear and a cold hoyster, in my pantry, the family being out.

Smith came as appinted. We descorsed on the subjick of the comady; and, after sefral glases, we each of us agreed to write a letter to the other, giving our notiums of the pease. Paper was brought that momint; and Smith writing his harticle across the knife-bord, I dasht off mine on the dresser.

Our agreement was, that I (being remarkabble for my style of riting) should cretasize the languidge, whilst he should take up with the plot of the play; and the candied reader will parding me for having holtered the original address of my letter, and directed it to Sir Edward himself; and for having incopperated Smith's remarks in the midst of my own:—

* The "authorized" announcement in the *John Bull* newspaper sets this question at rest. It is declared that her ladyship is not the writer of the *Diary*.—O. Y.

MAYFAIR, *Nov.* 30, 1839. *Midnite.*

HONRABBLE BARNET!—Retired from the littery world a year or moar, I didn't think anythink would injuice me to come forrards again; for I was content with my share of reputation, and propoas'd to add nothink to those immortial wux which have rendered this Magaseen so sallybrated.

Shall I tell you the reazn of my re-appearants?—a desire for the benefick of my fellow-creatures? Fiddlestick! A mighty truth with which my busm laboured, and which I must bring forth or die? Nonsince—stuff: money's the secret, my dear Barnet,—money—*Targong, gelt, spicunia.* Here's quarter-day coming, and I'm blest if I can pay my landlud, unless I can ad hartificially to my inkum.

This is, however, betwigst you and me. There's no need to blacard the streets with it, or to tell the British public that Fitzroy Y–ll–wpl–sh is short of money, or that the sallybrated hauthor of the Y—— Papers is in peskewniary difficklties, or is fiteagued by his superhuman littery labors, or by his famly suckmstansies, or by any other pusnal matter: my maxim, dear B, is on these pints to be as quiet as posbile. What the juice does the public care for you or me? Why must we always, in prefizzes and what not, be a-talking about ourselves and our igstrodnary merrats, woas, and injaries? It is on this subjick that I porpies, my dear Barnet, to speak to you in a frendly way; and praps you'll find my advise talrabbly holesum.

Well, then—if you care about the apinions, fur good or evil, of us poor suvvants—I tell you, in the most candied way, I like you, Barnet. I've had my fling at you in my day (for, *entry nou*, that last stoary I roat about you and Larnder was as big a bownsir as ever was)—I've had my fling at you; but I like you. One may objeck to an immence deal of your writings, which, betwigst you and me, contain more sham scentiment, sham morallaty, sham poatry, than you'd like to own; but, in spite of this, there's the *stuff* in you. You've a kind and loyal heart in you, Barnet—a trifle deboshed, perhaps; a kean i, igspecially for what's comic (as for your tradgady, it's mighty flatchulent), and a ready plesnt pen. The man who says you are an As is an As himself. Don't believe him, Barnet! not that I suppose

you wil—for, if I've formed a correck apinion of you from your wucks, you think your small-becar as good as most men's: every man does—and why not? We brew, and we love our own tap—amen; but the pint betwigst us, is this stewpid, absudd way of crying out, because the public don't like it too. Why shood they, my dear Barnet? You may vow that they are fools, or that the critix are your enemies, or that the wuld should judge your poams by your critticle rules, and not their own; you may beat your breast, and vow you are a marter,—and you won't mend the matter. Take heart, man! you're not so misrabble after all: your spirits need not be so *very* cast down; you are not so *very* badly paid. I'd lay a wager that you make, with one thing or another—plays, novvles, pamphlicks, and little odd jobs here and there—your three thowsnd a year. There's many a man, dear Bullwig, that works for less, and lives content. Why shouldn't you? Three thowsnd a year is no such bad thing—let alone the barnetcy: it must be a great comfort to have that bloody hand in your skitching.

But don't you sea, that in a wuld naturally envius, wickid, and fond of a joak, this very barnetcy, these very cumplaints—this ceaseless groning, and moning, and wining of yours, is igsackly the thing which makes people laff and snear more? If you were ever at a great school, you must recklect who was the boy most bullid, and buffitid, and purshewd—he who minded it most. He who could take a basting got but few; he who rord and wep because the knotty boys called him nicknames, was nicknamed wuss and wuss. I recklect there was at our school, in Smithfield, a chap of this milksop, spoony sort, who appeared among the romping, ragged fellers in a fine flanning dressing-gownd that his mama had given him. That pore boy was beaten in a way that his dear ma and aunts didn't know him; his fine flanning dressing-gownd was torn all to ribbings, and he got no pease in the school ever after, but was abliged to be taken to some other saminary, where, I make no doubt, he was paid off igsactly in the same way.

Do you take the halligory, my dear Barnet? *Mutayto nominy*—you know what I mean. You are the boy, and your barnetcy is the dressing-gownd. You dress yourself

out finer than other chaps, and they all begin to sault and hustle you: it's human nature, Barnet. You show weakness, think of your dear ma, mayhap, and begin to cry: it's all over with you; the whole school is at you—upper boys and under, big and little; the dirtiest little fag in the place will pipe out blaggerd names at you, and take his pewny tug at your tail.

The only way to avoid such consperracies is to put a pair of stowt shoalders forrards, and bust through the crowd of raggymuffins. A good bold fellow dubls his fistt, and cries, "Wha dares meddle wi' me?" When Scott got *his* barnetcy, for instans, did any one of us cry out? No, by the laws, he was our master; and wo betide the chap that said neigh to him! But there's barnets and barnets. Do you recklect that fine chapter in "Squintin Durward," about the too fellos and cups, at the siege of the bishop's castle? One of them was a brave warrier, and kep *his* cup; they strangled the other chap—strangled him, and laffed at him too.

With respeck, then, to the barnetcy pint, this is my advice: brazen it out. Us littery men I take to be like a pack of schoolboys—childish, greedy, envius, holding by our friends, and always ready to fight. What must be a man's conduck among such? He must either take no notis, and pass on myjastick, or else turn round and pummle soundly—one, two, right and left, ding dong over the face and eyes; above all, never acknowledge that he is hurt. Years ago, for instans (we've no ill-blood, but only mention this by way of igsample), you began a sparring with this Magaseen. Law bless you, such a ridicklus gaym I never see: a man so belaybord, beflustered, bewolloped, was never known; it was the laff of the whole town. Your intelackshal natur, respected Barnet, is not fizzickly adapted, so to speak, for encounters of this sort. You must not indulge in combats with us course bullies of the press; you have not the *stominy* for a reglar set-to. What, then, is your plan? In the midst of the mob to pass as quiet as you can: you won't be undistubbed. Who is? Some stray kix and buffits will fall to you—mortial man is subjick to such; but if you begin to wins and cry out, and set up for a marter, wo betide you!

These remarks, pusnal as I confess them to be, are yet,

I assure you, written in perfick good-natur, and have been inspired by your play of the "Sea Capting," and prefiz to it; which latter is on matters intirely pusnal, and will, therefore, I trust, igscuse this kind of *ad hominam* (as they say) diskcushion. I propose, honrabble Barnit, to cumsider calmly this play and prephiz, and to speak of both with that honisty which, in the pantry or studdy, I've been always phamous for. Let us, in the first place, listen to the opening of the "Preface of the Fourth Edition";—

"No one can be more sensible than I am of the many faults and deficiencies to be found in this play; but, perhaps, when it is considered how very rarely it has happened in the history of our dramatic literature that good acting plays have been produced, except by those who have either been actors themselves, or formed their habits of literature, almost of life, behind the scenes, I might have looked for a criticism more generous, and less exacting and rigorous, than that by which the attempts of an author accustomed to another class of composition have been received by a large proportion of the periodical press.

"It is scarcely possible, indeed, that this play should not contain faults of two kinds: first, the faults of one who has necessarily much to learn in the mechanism of his art; and, secondly, of one who, having written largely in the narrative style of fiction, may not unfrequently mistake the effects of a novel for the effects of a drama. I may add to these, perhaps, the deficiencies that arise from uncertain health and broken spirits, which render the author more susceptible than he might have been some years since to that spirit of depreciation and hostility which it has been his misfortune to excite amongst the general contributors to the periodical press; for the consciousness that every endeavour will be made to cavil, to distort, to misrepresent, and, in fine, if possible, to *run down*, will occasionally haunt even the hours of composition, to check the inspiration, and damp the ardour.

"Having confessed this much frankly and fairly, and with a hope that I may ultimately do better, should I continue to write for the stage (which nothing but an assurance that, with all my defects, I may yet bring some little aid to the

drama, at a time when any aid, however humble, ought to be welcome to the lovers of the art, could induce me to do), may I be permitted to say a few words as to some of the objections which have been made against this play?"

Now, my dear sir, look what a pretty number of please you put forrards here, why your play shouldn't be good.

First. Good plays are almost always written by actors.

Secknd. You are a novice to the style of composition.

Third. You *may* be mistaken in your effects, being a novelist by trade, and not a play-writer.

Fourthly. Your in such bad helth and sperrits.

Fifthly. Your so afraid of the critix, that they damp your arder.

For shame, for shame, man! What confeshns is these—what painful pewling and piping! Your not a babby. I take you to be some seven or eight and thutty years old—"in the morning of youth," as the flosofer says. Don't let any such nonsince take your reazn prisoner. What you, an old hand amongst us—an old soljer of our sovring quean the press—you, who have had the best pay, have held the topmost rank (ay, and *deserved* them too!—I gif you leaf to quot me in sasiaty, and say, "I *am* a man of genius: Y-ll-wpl-sh says so")—you to lose heart, and cry pickavy, and begin to howl, because little boys fling stones at you! Fie, man! take courage; and, bearing the terrows of your blood-red hand, as the poet says, punish us, if we've ofended you—punish us like a man, or bear your own punishment like a man. Don't try to come off with such misrabble lodgic as that above.

What do you? You give four satisfackary reazns that the play is bad (the secknd is naught—for your no such chicking at play-writing, this being the forth). You show that the play must be bad, and *then* begin to deal with the critix for finding folt!

Was there ever wuss generalship? The play *is* bad—your right—a wuss I never see or read. But why kneed *you* say so? If it was so *very* bad, why publish it? *Because you wish to serve the drama!* O fie! don't lay that flattering function to your sole, as Milton observes. Do you believe

that this "Sea Capting" can serve the drama? Did you never intend that it should serve anything, or anybody *else*? Of cors you did! You wrote it for money—money from the maniger, money from the bookseller—for the same reason that I write this. Sir, Shakspeare wrote for the very same reasons, and I never heard that he bragged about serving the drama. Away with this canting about great motifs! Let us not be too prowd, my dear Barnet, and fansy ourselves marters of the truth, marters or apostels. We are but tradesmen, working for bread, and not for righteousness' sake. Let's try and work honestly; but don't let us be prayting pompisly about our "sacred calling." The taylor who makes your coats (and very well they are made too, with the best of velvit collars)—I say Stulze, or Nugee, might cry out that *their* motifs were but to assert the eturnle truth of tayloring, with just as much reazn; and who would believe them?

Well; after this acknollitchmint that the play is bad, come sefral pages of attack on the critix, and the folt those gentry have found with it. With these I shan't middle for the presnt. You defend all the characters 1 by 1, and conclude your remarks as follows:—

"I must be pardoned for this disquisition on my own designs. When every means is employed to misrepresent, it becomes, perhaps, allowable to explain. And if I do not think that my faults as a dramatic author are to be found in the study and delineation of character, it is precisely because *that* is the point on which all my previous pursuits in literature and actual life would be most likely to preserve me from the errors I own elsewhere, whether of misjudgment or inexperience.

"I have now only to add my thanks to the actors for the zeal and talent with which they have embodied the characters entrusted to them. The sweetness and grace with which Miss Faucit embellished the part of Violet, which, though only a sketch, is most necessary to the colouring and harmony of the play, were perhaps the more pleasing to the audience from the generosity, rare with actors, which induced her to take a part so far inferior to her powers. The applause

which attends the performance of Mrs. Warner and Mr. Strickland attests their success in characters of unusual difficulty; while the singular beauty and nobleness, whether of conception or execution, with which the greatest of living actors has elevated the part of Norman (so totally different from his ordinary range of character), is a new proof of his versatility and accomplishment in all that belongs to his art. It would be scarcely gracious to conclude these remarks without expressing my acknowledgment of that generous and indulgent sense of justice which, forgetting all political differences in a literary arena, has enabled me to appeal to approving audiences — from hostile critics. And it is this which alone encourages me to hope that, sooner or later, I may add to the dramatic literature of my country something that may find, perhaps, almost as many friends in the next age as it has been the fate of the author to find enemies in this."

See, now, what a good comfrabble vanaty is! Pepple have quarld with the dramatic characters of your play. "No," says you; "if I *am* remarkabble for anythink, it's for my study and delineation of character; *that* is presizely the pint to which my littery purshuits have led me." Have you read "Jil Blaw," my dear sir? Have you pirouzed that exlent tragady, the "Critic"? There's something so like this in Sir Fretful Plaguy, and the Archbishop of Granadiers, that I'm blest if I can't laff till my sides ake. Think of the critix fixing on the very pint for which you are famus!—the roags! And spose they had said the plot was absudd, or the langwitch absudder, still, don't you think you would have had a word in defens of them too—you who hope to find frends for your dramatic wux in the nex age? Poo! I tell thee, Barnet, that the nex age will be wiser and better than this; and do you think that it will imply itself a reading of your trajadies? This is misantrofy, Barnet—reglar Byronism; and you ot to have a better apinian of human natur.

Your apinion about the actors I shan't here middle with. They all acted exlently as far as my humbile judgement goes, and your write in giving them all possible prays. But let's consider the last sentence of the prefiz, my dear Barnet, and see what a pretty set of apiniuns you lay down.

1. The critix are your inymies in this age.

2. In the nex, however, you hope to find newmrous frends.

3. And it's a satisfackshn to think that, in spite of polititicle diffrances, you have found frendly aujences here.

Now, my dear Barnet, for a man who begins so humbly with what my friend Father Prout calls an *argamantum ad misericorjam*, who ignoledges that his play is bad, that his pore dear helth is bad, and those cussid critix have played the juice with him—I say, for a man who beginns in such a humbill toan, it's rayther *rich* to see how you end.

My dear Barnet, *do* you suppose that *polititicle diffrances* prejudice pepple against *you?* What *are* your politix? Wig, I presume—so are mine, *entry noo*. And what if they *are* Wig, or Raddicele, or Cumsuvvative? Does any mortial man in England care a phig for your politix? Do you think yourself such a mity man in parlymint, that critix are to be angry with you, and aujences to be cumsidered magnanamous because they treat you fairly? There, now, was Sherridn, he who roat the "Rifles" and "School for Scandle" (I saw the "Rifles" after your play, and, O Barnet, if you *knew* what a relief it was!)—there, I say, was Sherridn—he *was* a polititicle character, if you please—he *could* make a spitch or two—do you spose that Pitt, Purseyvall, Castlerag, old George the Third himself, wooden go to see the "Rivles"—ay, and clap hands too, and laff and ror, for all Sherry's Wiggery? Do you spose the critix wouldn't applaud too? For shame, Barnet! what ninnis, what hartless raskles, you must beleave them to be—in the fust plase, to fancy that you are a polititicle genus; in the secknd, to let your politix interfear with their notiums about littery merits!

"Put that nonsince out of your head," as Fox said to Bonypart. Wasn't it that great genus, Dennis, that wrote in Swiff and Poop's time, who fansid that the French king wooden make pease unless Dennis was delivered up to him? Upon my wud, I doan't think he cartid his diddlusion much further than a serting honrabble barnet of my aquentance.

And then for the nex age. Respected sir, this is another diddlusion—a grose misteak on your part, or my name is not Y—sh. These plays immortial? Ah, *parrysamje*, as the French say, this is too strong—the small-beer of the "Sea

Capting," or of any suxessor of the "Sea Capting," to keep sweet for sentries and sentries! Barnet, Barnet! do you know the natur of bear? Six weeks is not past, and here your last casque is sour—the public won't even now drink it; and I lay a wager that, betwigst this day (the thuttieth November) and the end of the year, the barl will be off the stox altogether, never, never to return.

I've notted down a few frazes here and there, which you will do well to igsamin :—

NORMAN.

"The eternal Flora
Woos to her odorous haunts the western wind;
While circling round and upwards from the boughs,
Golden with fruits that lure the joyous birds,
Melody, like a happy soul released,
Hangs in the air, and from invisible plumes
Shakes sweetness down!"

NORMAN.

"And these the lips
Where, till this hour, the sad and holy kiss
Of parting linger'd, as the fragrance left
By *angels* when they touch the earth and vanish."

NORMAN.

"Hark! she has blessed her son! I bid ye witness,
Ye listening heavens—thou circumambient air:
The ocean sighs it back—and with the murmur
Rustle the happy leaves. All nature breathes
Aloud—aloft—to the Great Parent's ear,
The blessing of the mother on her child."

NORMAN.

"I dream of love, enduring faith, a heart
Mingled with mine—a deathless heritage,
Which I can take unsullied to the *stars*,
When the Great Father calls His children home."

NORMAN.

"The blue air, breathless in the *starry* peace,
After long silence hushed as heaven, but filled
With happy thoughts as heaven with *angels*."

NORMAN.

"Till one calm night, when over earth and wave
Heaven looked its love from all its numberless *stars*."

NORMAN.

" Those eyes, the guiding *stars* by which I steered."

NORMAN.

" That great mother
(The only parent I have known), whose face
Is bright with gazing ever on the *stars*—
The mother-sea."

NORMAN.

" My bark shall be our home ;
The *stars* that light the *angel* palaces
Of air, our lamps."

NORMAN.

" A name that glitters, like a *star*, amidst
The galaxy of England's loftiest born."

LADY ARUNDEL.

" And see him princeliest of the lion tribe,
Whose swords and coronals gleam around the throne,
The guardian *stars* of the imperial isle."

The fust spissymen has been going the round of all the papers, as real, reglar poatry. Those wickid critix! they must have been laffing in their sleafs when they quoted it. Malody, suckling round and uppards from the bows, like a happy soul released, hangs in the air, and from invizable plumes shakes sweetness down. Mighty fine, truly! but let mortial man tell the meanink of the passidge. Is it *musickle* sweetniss that Malody shakes down from its plumes—its wings, that is, or tail—or some pekewliar scent that proceeds from happy souls released, and which they shake down from the trees when they are suckling round and uppards? *Is* this poatry, Barnet? Lay your hand on your busm, and speak out boldly: Is it poatry, or sheer windy humbugg, that sounds a little melojous, and won't bear the commanest test of comman sence?

In passidge number 2, the same bisniss is going on, though in a more comprehensable way: the air, the leaves, the otion, are fild with emocean at Capting Norman's happiness. Pore Nature is dragged in to partisapate in his joys, just as she has been befor. Once in a poem, this universle simfithy is very well. But once is enuff, my dear Barnet; and that

once should be in some great suckmstans, surely—such as the meeting of Adam and Eve, in "Paradice Lost," or Jewpeter and Jewno, in Hoamer, where there seems, as it were, a reasn for it. But sea captings should not be eternly spowting and invoking gods, hevns, starrs, angels, and other silestial influences. We can all do it, Barnet; nothing in life is esier. I can compare my livry buttons to the stars, or the clouds of my backopipe to the dark vollums that ishew from Mount Hetna; or I can say that angels are looking down from them, and the tobacco silf, like a happy sole released, is circling round and upwards, and shaking sweetness down. All this is as esy as drink; but it's not poatry, Barnet, nor natural. People, when their mothers reckonise them, don't howl about the suckumambient air, and paws to think of the happy leaves a-rustling—at least, one mistrusts them if they do. Take another instans out of your own play. Capting Norman (with his eternll *slack-jaw!*) meets the gal of his art:—

"Look up, look up, my Violet—weeping? fie!
And trembling too—yet leaning on my breast.
In truth, thou art too soft for such rude shelter.
Look up! I come to woo thee to the seas,
My sailor's bride! Hast thou no voice but blushes?
Nay—From those roses let me, like the bee,
Drag forth the secret sweetness!"

VIOLET.

"Oh what thoughts
Were kept for *speech* when we once more should meet,
Now blotted from the *page*; and all I feel
Is—*thou* art with me!"

Very right, Miss Violet—the scentiment is natral, affeckshnit, pleasing, simple (it might have been in more grammaticle languidge, and no harm done); but never mind, the feeling is pritty; and I can fancy, my dear Barnet, a pritty, smiling, weeping lass, looking up in a man's face and saying it. But the capting!—oh, this capting!—this windy, spouting captain, with his prittinesses, and conseated apollogies for the hardness of his busm, and his old, stale, vapid simalies, and his wishes to be a bee! Pish! Men don't make love in this finniking way. It's the part of a sentymentle, poeticle

taylor, not a galliant gentleman, in command of one of her Madjisty's vessels of war.

Look at the remaining extrac, honored Barnet, and acknollidge that Capting Norman is eturnly repeating himself, with his endless jabber about stars and angels. Look at the neat grammaticle twist of Lady Arundel's spitch, too, who, in the corse of three lines, has made her son a prince, a lion, with a sword and coronal, and a star. Why jumble and sheak up metafors in this way? Barnet, one simily is quite enuff in the best of sentenses (and I preshume I kneedn't tell you that it's as well to have it *like*, when you are about it). Take my advise, honrabble sir—listen to a humble footmin: it's genrally best in poatry to understand puffickly what you mean yourself, and to ingspress your meaning clearly afterwoods—in the simpler words the better, praps. You may, for instans, call a coronet a coronal (an "ancestral coronal," p. 74) if you like, as you might call a hat a "swart sombrero," "a glossy four-and-nine," "a silken helm, to storm impermeable, and lightsome as the breezy gossamer;" but, in the long run, it's as well to call it a hat. It *is* a hat; and that name is quite as poetticle as another. I think it's Playto, or els Harrystottle, who observes that what we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Confess now, dear Barnet, don't you long to call it a polyanthus?

I never see a play more carelessly written. In such a hurry you seem to have bean, that you have actially in some sentences forgot to put in the sence. What is this, for instance?—

> "This thrice precious one
> Smiled to my eyes—drew being from my breast—
> Slept in my arms;—the very tears I shed
> Above my treasures were to men and angels
> Alike such holy sweetness!"

In the name of all the angels that ever you invoked—Raphael, Gabriel, Uriel, Zadkiel, Arrael—what does this "holy sweetness" mean? We're not spinxes to read such durk conandrums. If you knew my state sins I came upon this passidg—I've neither slep nor eton; I've neglected my pantry; I've been wandring from house to house with this

| in my hand, and nobody can understand it. All Mr. ier's men are wild, looking gloomy at one another, and ıg what this may be. All the cumtributors have been k to. The Doctor, who knows every languitch, has tried giv'n up; we've sent to Docter Pettigruel, who reads glifics a deal ezier than my way of spellin'—no anser. :k! quick with a fifth edition, honored Barnet, and set t rest! While your about it, please, too, to igsplain the last lines:—

"His merry bark with England's flag to crown her."

what dellexy of igspreshn, "a flag to crown her!"

"His merry bark with England's flag to crown her,
Fame for my hopes, and women in my cares."

wise the following:—

"Girl, beware,
THE LOVE THAT TRIFLES ROUND THE CHARMS IT GILDS,
OFT RUINS WHILE IT SHINES."

splain this, men and angels! I've tried every way—ards, forards, and in all sorts of trancepositions, as :—

The love that ruins round the charms it shines,
Gilds while it trifles oft;

The charm that gilds around the love it ruins,
Oft trifles while it shines;

The ruins that love gilds and shines around,
Oft trifles where it charms;

Love, while it charms, shines round, and ruins oft
The trifles that it gilds;

The love that trifles, gilds and ruins oft,
While round the charms it shines.

vhich are as sensable as the fust passidge.
nd with this I'll alow my friend Smith, who has been t all this time, to say a few words. He has not written so much as me (being an infearor genus, betwigst our-

selves), but he says he never had such mortial difficklty with anything as with the dixcripshn of the plott of your pease. Here his letter :—

To CH-RL-S F-TZR-Y PL-NT-G-N-T Y-LL-WPL-SH, ESQ., *&c. &c.*

30*th Nov.*, 1839.

MY DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,—I have the pleasure of laying before you the following description of the plot, and a few remarks upon the style, of the piece called "The Sea Captain."

Five-and-twenty years back, a certain Lord Arundel had a daughter, heiress of his estates and property ; a poor cousin, Sir Maurice Beevor (being next in succession) ; and a page, Arthur Le Mesnil by name.

The daughter took a fancy for the page, and the young persons were married unknown to his lordship.

Three days before her confinement (thinking, no doubt, that period favourable for travelling), the young couple had agreed to run away together, and had reached a chapel near on the sea-coast, from which they were to embark, when Lord Arundel abruptly put a stop to their proceedings by causing one Gaussen, a pirate, to murder the page.

His daughter was carried back to Arundel House, and, in three days, gave birth to a son. Whether his lordship knew of this birth I cannot say ; the infant, however, was never acknowledged, but carried by Sir Maurice Beevor to a priest, Onslow by name, who educated the lad, and kept him for twelve years in profound ignorance of his birth. The boy went by the name of Norman.

Lady Arundel meanwhile married again, again became a widow, but had a second son, who was the acknowledged heir, and called Lord Ashdale. Old Lord Arundel died, and her ladyship became countess in her own right.

When Norman was about twelve years of age, his mother, who wished to "*waft* young Arthur to a distant land," had him sent on board ship. Who should the captain of the ship be but Gaussen, who received a smart bribe from Sir Maurice Beevor to kill the lad. Accordingly Gaussen tied him to a plank, and pitched him overboard.

* * * * *

About thirteen years after these circumstances, Violet, an orphan niece of Lady Arundel's second husband, came to pass a few weeks with her ladyship. She had just come from a sea-voyage, and had been saved from a wicked Algerine by an English sea captain. This sea captain was no other than Norman, who had been picked up off his plank, and fell in love with, and was loved by, Miss Violet.

A short time after Violet's arrival at her aunt's the captain came to pay her a visit, his ship anchoring off the coast, near Lady Arundel's residence. By a singular coincidence, that rogue Gaussen's ship anchored in the harbour too. Gaussen at once knew his man, for he had "tracked" him (after drowning him), and he informed Sir Maurice Beevor that young Norman was alive.

Sir Maurice Beevor informed her ladyship. How should she get rid of him? In this wise. He was in love with Violet: let him marry her and be off; for Lord Ashdale was in love with his cousin too, and, of course, could not marry a young woman in her station of life. "You have a chaplain on board," says her ladyship to Captain Norman: "let him attend to-night in the ruined chapel, marry Violet, and away with you to sea." By this means she hoped to be quit of him for ever.

But unfortunately the conversation had been overheard by Beevor, and reported to Ashdale. Ashdale determined to be at the chapel and carry off Violet. As for Beevor, he sent Gaussen to the chapel to kill both Ashdale and Norman: thus there would only be Lady Arundel between him and the title.

Norman, in the meanwhile, who had been walking near the chapel, had just seen his worthy old friend, the priest, most barbarously murdered there. Sir Maurice Beevor had set Gaussen upon him: his reverence was coming with the papers concerning Norman's birth, which Beevor wanted in order to extort money from the countess. Gaussen was, however, obliged to run before he got the papers; and the clergyman had time, before he died, to tell Norman the story, and give him the documents, with which Norman sped off to the castle to have an interview with his mother.

He lays his white cloak and hat on the table, and begs to

might pass by itself, but together, like the quadrupeds of Kilkenny, they devour each other. The captain tells his lieutenant *to bid his bark veer round* to a point in the harbour. Was ever such language? My lady gives Sir Maurice a thousand pounds to *waft* him (her son) to some distant shore. Nonsense, sheer nonsense; and what is worse, affected nonsense!

Look at the comedy of the poor cousin. "There is a great deal of game on the estate—partridges, hares, wild-geese, snipes, and plovers (*smacking his lips*)—besides a magnificent preserve of sparrows, which I can sell *to the little blackguards* in the streets at a penny a hundred. But I am very poor—a very poor old knight!"

Is this wit or nature? It is a kind of sham wit; it reads as if it were wit, but it is not. What poor, poor stuff about the little blackguard boys! what flimsy ecstasies and silly "smacking of lips" about the plovers. Is this the man who writes for the next age? O fie! Here is another joke:—

> "*Sir Maurice.* Mice! zounds, how can I
> Keep mice? I can't afford it! They were starved
> To death an age ago. The last was found
> Come Christmas three years, stretched beside a bone
> In that same larder, so consumed and worn
> By pious fast, 'twas awful to behold it!
> I canonized its corpse in spirits of wine,
> And set it in the porch—a solemn warning
> To thieves and beggars!"

Is not this rare wit? "Zounds, how can I keep mice?" is well enough for a miser—not too new, or brilliant either; but this miserable dilution of a thin joke, this wretched hunting down of the poor mouse! It is humiliating to think of a man of *esprit* harping so long on such a mean, pitiful string. A man who aspires to immortality, too! I doubt whether it is to be gained thus; whether our author's words are not too loosely built to make "starry-pointing pyramids of." Horace clipped and squared his blocks more carefully before he laid the monument which *imber edax*, or *aquilo impotens*, or *fuga temporum* might assail in vain. Even old Ovid, when he raised his stately, shining heathen temple, had placed some columns in it, and hewn out a statue or two

which deserved the immortality that he prophesied (somewhat arrogantly) for himself. But let not all be looking forward to a future, and fancying that, "*incerti spatium dum finiat ævi*," our books are to be immortal. Alas! the way to immortality is not so easy, nor will our "Sea Captain" be permitted such an unconscionable cruise. If all the immortalities were really to have their wish, what a work would our descendants have to study them all!

Not yet, in my humble opinion, has the honourable baronet achieved this deathless consummation. There will come a day (may it be long distant!) when the very best of his novels will be forgotten; and it is reasonable to suppose that his dramas will pass out of existence, some time or other, in the lapse of the *secula seculorum*. In the meantime, my dear Plush, if you ask me what the great obstacle is towards the dramatic fame and merit of our friend, I would say that it does not lie so much in hostile critics or feeble health, as in a careless habit of writing, and a peevish vanity which causes him to shut his eyes to his faults. The question of original capacity I will not moot; one may think very highly of the honourable baronet's talent, without rating it quite so high as he seems disposed to do.

And to conclude: as he has chosen to combat the critics in person, the critics are surely justified in being allowed to address him directly.

With best compliments to Mrs. Yellowplush,
I have the honour to be, dear Sir,
Your most faithful and obliged
humble servant,
JOHN THOMAS SMITH.

And now, Smith having finisht his letter, I think I can't do better than clothes mine lickwise; for though I should never be tired of talking, praps the public may of hearing, and therefore it's best to shut up shopp.

What I've said, respected Barnit, I hoap you woan't take unkind. A play, you see, is public property for every one to say his say on; and I think, if you read your prefez over agin, you'll see that it ax as a direct incouridgment to us critix to come forrard and notice you. But don't fansy, I

besitch you, that we are actiated by hostillaty. Fust write a good play, and you'll see we'll prays it fast enuff. Waiting which, *Agray, Munseer le Chevaleer, l'ashurance de ma hot cumsideratun.*

Voter distangy,

Y.

END OF "THE MEMOIRS OF MR. C. J. YELLOWPLUSH."

CHARACTER SKETCHES

CHARACTER SKETCHES.

CAPTAIN ROOK AND MR. PIGEON.

THE statistic-mongers and dealers in geography have calculated to a nicety how many quartern loaves, bars of iron, pigs of lead, sacks of wool, Turks, Quakers, Methodists, Jews, Catholics, and Church-of-England men are consumed or produced in the different countries of this wicked world: I should like to see an accurate table showing the rogues and dupes of each nation; the calculation would form a pretty matter for a philosopher to speculate upon. The mind loves to repose, and broods benevolently over this expanded theme. What thieves are there in Paris, O heavens! and what a power of rogues with pigtails and mandarin buttons at Pekin! Crowds of swindlers are there at this very moment pursuing their trade at St. Petersburg; how many scoundrels are saying their prayers alongside of Don Carlos! how many scores are jobbing under the pretty nose of Queen Christina! what an inordinate number of rascals is there, to be sure, puffing tobacco and drinking flat small-beer in all the capitals of Germany; or else, without a rag to their ebony backs, swigging quass out of calabashes, and smeared over with palm-oil, lolling at the doors of clay huts in the sunny city of Timbuctoo! It is not necessary to make any more topographical allusions, or, for illustrating the above position, to go through the whole Gazetteer; but he is a bad philosopher who has not all these things in mind, and does not in his speculations or his estimate of mankind duly consider and weigh them. And

it is fine and consolatory to think that thoughtful Nature, which has provided sweet flowers for the humming bee; fair running streams for glittering fish; store of kids, deer, goats, and other fresh meat for roaring lions; for active cats, mice; for mice, cheese, and so on; establishing throughout the whole of her realm the great doctrine that where a demand is there will be a supply (see the romances of Adam Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo, and the philosophical works of Miss Martineau): I say it is consolatory to think that, as Nature has provided flies for the food of fishes, and flowers for bees, so she has created fools for rogues; and thus the scheme is consistent throughout. Yes, observation with extensive view will discover Captain Rooks all over the world, and Mr. Pigeons made for their benefit. Wherever shines the sun, you are sure to find Folly basking in it; and knavery is the shadow at Folly's heels.

It is not, however, necessary to go to St. Petersburg or Pekin for rogues (and in truth I don't know whether the Timbuctoo Captain Rooks prefer cribbage or billiards). "We are not birds," as the Irishman says, "to be in half a dozen places at once;" so let us pretermit all considerations of rogues in other countries, examining only those who flourish under our very noses. I have travelled much, and seen many men and cities; and, in truth, I think that our country of England produces the best soldiers, sailors, razors, tailors, brewers, hatters, and rogues, of all. Especially there is no cheat like an English cheat. Our society produces them in the greatest numbers as well as of the greatest excellence. We supply all Europe with them. I defy you to point out a great city of the Continent where half a dozen of them are not to be found—proofs of our enterprise and samples of our home manufacture. Try Rome, Cheltenham, Baden, Toeplitz, Madrid, or Tzarskoselo: I have been in every one of them, and give you my honour that the Englishman is the best rascal to be found in all; better than your eager Frenchman; your swaggering Irishman, with a red velvet waistcoat and red whiskers; your grave Spaniard, with horrid goggle eyes and profuse diamond shirt-pins; your tallow-faced German baron, with white moustache and double chin, fat, pudgy, dirty fingers,

and great gold thumb-ring; better even than your nondescript Russian—swindler and spy as he is by loyalty and education—the most dangerous antagonist we have. Who has the best coat even at Vienna? who has the neatest britzska at Baden? who drinks the best champagne at Paris? Captain Rook, to be sure, of her Britannic Majesty's service: he *has* been of the service, that is to say, but often finds it convenient to sell out.

The life of a blackleg, which is the name contemptuously applied to Captain Rook in his own country, is such an easy, comfortable, careless, merry one, that I can't conceive why all the world do not turn Captain Rooks; unless, may be, there are some mysteries and difficulties in it which the vulgar know nothing of, and which only men of real genius can overcome. Call on Captain Rook in the day (in London, he lives about St. James's; abroad, he has the very best rooms in the very best hotels), and you will find him at one o'clock dressed in the very finest *robe de chambre*, before a breakfast-table covered with the prettiest patties and delicacies possible; smoking, perhaps, one of the biggest meerschaum pipes you ever saw; reading, possibly, *The Morning Post*, or a novel (he has only one volume in his whole room, and that from a circulating library); or having his hair dressed; or talking to a tailor about waistcoat patterns; or drinking soda water with a glass of sherry: all this he does every morning, and it does not seem very difficult, and lasts until three. At three, he goes to a horse-dealer's, and lounges there for half an hour; at four, he is to be seen at the window of his Club; at five, he is cantering and curveting in Hyde Park with one or two more (he does not know any ladies, but has many male acquaintances: some, stout old gentlemen riding cobs, who knew his family, and give him a surly grunt of recognition; some, very young lads with pale dissolute faces, little moustaches perhaps, or at least little tufts on their chin, who hail him eagerly as a man of fashion); at seven, he has a dinner at "Long's" or at the "Clarendon;" and so to bed very likely at five in the morning, after a quiet game of whist, broiled bones, and punch.

Perhaps he dines early at a tavern in Covent Garden;

after which you will see him at the theatre in a private box (Captain Rook affects the Olympic a good deal). In the box, besides himself, you will remark a young man—very young—one of the lads who spoke to him in the Park this morning, and a couple of ladies: one shabby, melancholy, raw-boned, with numberless small white ringlets, large hands and feet, and a faded light blue silk gown; she has a large cap, trimmed with yellow, and all sorts of crumpled flowers and greasy blonde lace; she wears large gilt ear-rings, and sits back, and nobody speaks to her, and she to nobody, except to say, "Law, Maria, how well you *do* look to-night! there's a man opposite has been staring at you this three hours; I'm blest if it isn't him as we saw in the Park, dear!"

"I wish, Hanna, you'd 'old your tongue, and not bother me about the men.—You don't believe Miss 'Ickman, Freddy, do you?" says Maria, smiling fondly on Freddy. Maria is sitting in front: she says she is twenty-three, though Miss Hickman knows very well she is thirty-one (Freddy is just of age). She wears a purple velvet gown, three different gold bracelets on each arm, as many rings on each finger of each hand—to one is hooked a gold smelling-bottle; she has an enormous fan, a laced pocket-handkerchief, a Cashmere shawl, which is continually falling off, and exposing, very unnecessarily, a pair of very white shoulders; she talks loud, always lets her playbill drop into the pit, and smells most pungently of Mr. Delcroix's shop. After this description, it is not at all necessary to say who Maria is: Miss Hickman is her companion, and they live together in a very snug little house in May Fair, which has just been new-furnished *à la Louis Quatorze* by Freddy, as we are positively informed. It is even said that the little carriage, with two little white ponies, which Maria drives herself in such a fascinating way through the Park, was purchased for her by Freddy too; ay, and that Captain Rook got it for him—a great bargain of course.

Such is Captain Rook's life. Can anything be more easy? Suppose Maria says, "Come home, Rook, and beat a cold chicken with us, and a glass of iced champagne;" and suppose he goes, and after chicken—just for fun—Maria

proposes a little chicken-hazard: she only plays for shillings, while Freddy, a little bolder, won't mind half-pound stakes himself. Is there any great harm in all this? Well, after half an hour Maria grows tired, and Miss Hickman has been nodding asleep in the corner long ago; so off the two ladies set, candle in hand.

"D—n it, Fred," says Captain Rook, pouring out for that young gentleman his fifteenth glass of champagne, "what luck you are in, if you did but know how to back it!"

What more natural, and even kind, of Rook than to say this? Fred is evidently an inexperienced player; and every experienced player knows that there is nothing like backing your luck. Freddy does. Well, fortune is proverbially variable; and it is not at all surprising that Freddy, after having had so much luck at the commencement of the evening, should have the tables turned on him at some time or other.—Freddy loses.

It is deuced unlucky, to be sure, that he should have won all the little *coups* and lost all the great ones; but there is a plan which the commonest play-man knows, an infallible means of retrieving yourself at play: it is simply doubling your stake. Say you lose a guinea: you bet two guineas, which if you win, you win a guinea and your original stake; if you lose, you have but to bet four guineas on the third stake, eight on the fourth, sixteen on the fifth, thirty-two on the sixth, and so on. It stands to reason that you cannot lose *always*; and the very first time you win, all your losings are made up to you. There is but one drawback to this infallible process: if you begin at a guinea, double every time you lose, and lose fifteen times, you will have lost exactly sixteen thousand three hundred and eighty-four guineas—a sum which probably exceeds the amount of your yearly income; mine is considerably under that figure.

Freddy does not play this game then, yet; but being a poor-spirited creature, as we have seen he must be by being afraid to win, he is equally poor-spirited when he begins to lose: he is frightened—that is, increases his stakes, and backs his ill-luck. When a man does this, it is all over with him.

When Captain Rook goes home (the sun is peering through the shutters of the little drawing-room in Curzon Street, and the ghastly footboy—oh, how bleared his eyes look as he opens the door!)—when Captain Rook goes home, he has Freddy's I O U's in his pocket, to the amount, say, of three hundred pounds. Some people say that Maria has half of the money when it is paid; but this I don't believe: is Captain Rook the kind of fellow to give up a purse when his hand has once clawed hold of it?

Be this, however, true or not, it concerns us very little. The Captain goes home to Brook Street, plunges into bed much too tired to say his prayers, and wakes the next morning at twelve to go over such another day as we have just chalked out for him. As for Freddy, not poppy, nor mandragora, nor all the soda water at the chemist's, can ever medicine him to that sweet sleep which he might have had but for his loss. "*If* I had but played my king of hearts," sighed Fred, "and kept back my trump! but there's no standing against a fellow who turns up a king seven times running: if I *had* even but pulled up when Thomas (curse him!) brought up that infernal Curaçoa punch, I should have saved a couple of hundred," and so on go Freddy's lamentations. O luckless Freddy! dismal Freddy! silly gaby of a Freddy! you are hit now, and there is no cure for you but bleeding you almost to death's door. The homœopathic maxim of *similia similibus*—which means, I believe, that you are to be cured "by a hair of the dog that bit you"—must be put in practice with regard to Freddy; only not in homœopathic infinitesimal doses—no hair of the dog that bit him, but, *vice versâ*, the dog of the hair that tickled him. Freddy has begun to play—a mere trifle at first, but he must play it out; he must go the whole dog now, or there is no chance for him. He must play until he can play no more; he *will* play until he has not a shilling left to play with, when perhaps he may turn out an honest man, though the odds are against him: the betting is in favour of his being a swindler always—a rich or a poor one, as the case may be. I need not tell Freddy's name, I think, now; it stands on his card:—

MR. FREDERICK PIGEON,

LONG'S HOTEL.

I have said the chances are that Frederick Pigeon, Esq., will become a rich or a poor swindler, though the first chance, it must be confessed, is very remote. I once heard an actor, who could not write, speak, or even read English; who was not fit for any trade in the world, and had not the "nous" to keep an applestall, and scarcely even enough sense to make a member of Parliament—I once, I say, heard an actor, whose only qualifications were a large pair of legs, a large voice, and a very large neck, curse his fate and his profession, by which, do what he would, he could only make eight guineas a week. "No men," said he, with a great deal of justice, "were so ill paid as 'dramatic artists;' they laboured for nothing all their youths, and had no provision for old age." With this he sighed, and called for (it was on a Saturday night) the forty-ninth glass of brandy-and-water which he had drunk in the course of the week.

The excitement of his profession, I make no doubt, caused my friend Claptrap to consume this quantity of spirit-and-water, besides beer in the morning, after rehearsal; and I could not help musing over his fate. It is a hard one. To eat, drink, work a little, and be jolly; to be paid twice as much as you are worth, and then to go to ruin; to drop off the tree when you are swelled out, seedy, and over-ripe; and to lie rotting in the mud underneath, until at last you mingle with it.

Now, badly as the actor is paid (and the reader will the more readily pardon the above episode, because, in reality, it has nothing to do with the subject in hand), and luckless as his fate is, the lot of the poor blackleg is cast lower still. You never hear of a rich gambler, or of one who wins in the end. Where does all the money go to which is lost among them? Did you ever play a game at loo for sixpences? At the end of the night a great many of those small coins have been lost, and, in consequence, won; but ask the table all

round: one man has won three shillings; two have neither lost nor won; one rather thinks he has lost; and the three others have lost two pounds each. Is not this the fact, known to everybody who indulges in round games, and especially the noble game of loo? I often think that the devil's books, as cards are called, are let out to us from Old Nick's circulating library, and that he lays his paw upon a certain part of the winnings, and carries it off privily; else what becomes of all the money?

For instance, there is the gentleman whom the newspapers call "a noble earl of sporting celebrity"—if he has lost a shilling, according to the newspaper accounts, he has lost fifty millions: he drops fifty thousand pounds at the Derby, just as you and I would lay down twopence-halfpenny for half an ounce of Macabaw. Who has won these millions? Is it Mr. Crockford, or Mr. Bond, or Mr. Salon-des-Etrangers? (I do not call these latter gentlemen gamblers, for their speculation is a certainty); but who wins his money, and everybody else's money who plays and loses? Much money is staked in the absence of Mr. Crockford; many notes are given without the interference of the Bonds; there are hundreds of thousands of gamblers who are *étrangers* even to the *Salon-des-Etrangers*.

No, my dear sir, it is not in the public gambling-houses that the money is lost; it is not in them that your virtue is chiefly in danger. Better by half lose your income, your fortune, or your master's money, in a decent public hell, than in the private society of such men as my friend Captain Rook. But we are again and again digressing; the point is, is the Captain's trade a good one, and does it yield tolerably good interest for outlay and capital?

To the latter question first. At this very season of May, when the Rooks are very young, have you not, my dear friend, often tasted them in pies?—they are then so tender that you cannot tell the difference between them and pigeons. So, in like manner, our Rook has been in his youth undistinguishable from a pigeon. He does as he has been done by; yea, he has been plucked as even now he plucks his friend Mr. Frederick Pigeon. Say that he began the world with ten thousand pounds: every maravedi of this is gone,

and may be considered as the capital which he has sacrificed to learn his trade. Having spent £10,000, then, on an annuity of £650, he must look to a larger interest for his money—say fifteen hundred, two thousand, or three thousand pounds—decently to repay his risk and labour. Besides the money sunk in the first place, his profession requires continual annual outlays, as thus :—

Horses, carriages (including Epsom, Goodwood, Ascot, etc.)	£500	0	0
Lodgings, servants, and board	350	0	0
Watering-places, and touring	300	0	0
Dinners to give	150	0	0
Pocket-money	150	0	0
Gloves, handkerchiefs, perfumery, and tobacco (very moderate)	150	0	0
Tailors' bills (£100 say, never paid)	0	0	0
TOTAL	£1,600	0	0

I defy any man to carry on the profession in a decent way under the above sum : ten thousand sunk, and sixteen hundred annual expenses—no, it is *not* a good profession ; it is *not* good interest for one's money ; it is *not* a fair remuneration for a gentleman of birth, industry, and genius : and my friend Claptrap, who growls about *his* pay, may bless his eyes that he was not born a gentleman and bred up to such an unprofitable calling as this. Considering his trouble, his outlay, his birth and breeding, the Captain is most wickedly and basely rewarded. And when he is obliged to retreat, when his hand trembles, his credit is fallen, his bills laughed at by every money-lender in Europe, his tailors rampant and inexorable—in fact, when the *coup* of life will *sauter* for him no more—who will help the play-worn veteran? As Mitchel sings after Aristophanes,—

> "In glory he was seen, when his years as yet *were green ;*
> But now when his dotage is on him,
> God help him ! for no eye of those who pass him by
> Throws a look of compassion upon him."

Who indeed will help him?—not his family, for he has bled his father, his uncle, his old grandmother ; he has had slices out of his sisters' portions, and quarrelled with his brothers-

in-law; the old people are dead; the young ones hate him, and will give him nothing. Who will help him?—not his friends: in the first place, my dear sir, a man's friends very seldom do; in the second place, it is Captain Rook's business not to keep but to give up his friends. His acquaintances do not last more than a year—the time, namely, during which he is employed in plucking them—then they part. Pigeon has not a single feather left to his tail, and how should he help Rook, whom, *au reste*, he has learned to detest most cordially, and has found out to be a rascal? When Rook's ill day comes, it is simply because he has no more friends; he has exhausted them all, plucked every one as clean as the palm of your hand. And to arrive at this conclusion, Rook has been spending sixteen hundred a year and the prime of his life, and has moreover sunk ten thousand pounds! *Is* this a proper reward for a gentleman? I say it is a sin and a shame that an English gentleman should be allowed thus to drop down the stream without a single hand to help him.

The moral of the above remarks I take to be this: that blacklegging is as bad a trade as can be; and so let parents and guardians look to it, and not apprentice their children to such a villainous, scurvy way of living.

It must be confessed, however, that there are some individuals who have for the profession such a natural genius that no entreaties or example of parents will keep them from it, and no restraint or occupation occasioned by another calling. They do what Christians do not do: they leave all to follow their master the Devil; they cut friends, families, and good, thriving, profitable trades, to put up with this one, that is both unthrifty and unprofitable. They are in regiments: ugly whispers about certain midnight games at blind-hookey and a few odd bargains in horseflesh are borne abroad, and Cornet Rook receives the gentlest hint in the world that he had better sell out. They are in counting-houses, with a promise of partnership, for which papa is to lay down a handsome premium; but the firm of Hobbs, Bobbs, and Higgory can never admit a young gentleman who is a notorious gambler, is much oftener at the races than his desk, and has bills daily falling due at his private bankers'. The

father, that excellent old man, Sam Rook, so well known on 'Change in the war-time, discovers, at the end of five years, that his son has spent rather more than the four thousand pounds intended for his partnership, and cannot, in common justice to his other thirteen children, give him a shilling more. A pretty pass for flash young Tom Rook, with four horses in stable, a protemporaneous Mrs. Rook, very likely, in an establishment near the Regent's Park, and a bill for three hundred and seventy-five pounds coming due on the fifth of next month.

Sometimes young Rook is destined to the bar; and I am glad to introduce one of these gentlemen and his history to the notice of the reader. He was the son of an amiable gentleman, the Reverend Athanasius Rook, who took high honours at Cambridge in the year 1; was a fellow of Trinity in the year 2; and so continued a fellow and tutor of the College until a living fell vacant, on which he seized. It was only two hundred and fifty pounds a year; but the fact is, Athanasius was in love. Miss Gregory, a pretty, demure, simple governess at Miss Mickle's establishment for young ladies in Cambridge (where the reverend gentleman used often of late to take his tea), had caught the eye of the honest college tutor; and in Trinity walks, and up and down the Trumpington Road, he walked with her (and another young lady of course), talked with her, and told his love.

Miss Gregory had not a rap, as might be imagined; but she loved Athanasius with her whole soul and strength, and was the most orderly, cheerful, tender, smiling, bustling little wife that ever a country parson was blest withal. Athanasius took a couple of pupils at a couple of hundred guineas each, and so made out a snug income; ay, and laid by for a rainy day—a little portion for Harriet, when she should grow up and marry, and a help for Tom at college and at the bar. For you must know there were two little Rooks now growing in the rookery; and very happy were father and mother, I can tell you, to put meat down their tender little throats. Oh, if ever a man was good and happy, it was Athanasius; if ever a woman was happy and good, it was his wife! Not the whole parish, not the whole

county, not the whole kingdom, could produce such a snug rectory or such a pleasant *ménage*.

Athanasius's fame as a scholar, too, was great; and as his charges were very high, and as he received but two pupils, there was, of course, much anxiety among wealthy parents to place their children under his care. Future squires, bankers, yea, lords and dukes, came to profit by his instructions, and were led by him gracefully over the "Asses' bridge" into the sublime regions of mathematics, or through the syntax into the pleasant paths of classic lore.

In the midst of these companions Tom Rook grew up—more fondled and petted, of course, than they; cleverer than they; as handsome, dashing, well-instructed a lad for his years as ever went to college to be a senior wrangler, and went down without any such honour.

Fancy, then, our young gentleman installed at college, whither his father has taken him, and with fond veteran recollections has surveyed hall and grass-plots, and the old porter, and the old fountain, and the old rooms in which he used to live. Fancy the sobs of good little Mrs. Rook, as she parted with her boy; and the tears of sweet pale Harriet, as she clung round his neck, and brought him (in a silver paper, slobbered with many tears) a little crimson silk purse (with two guineas of her own in it, poor thing!). Fancy all this, and fancy young Tom, sorry too, but yet restless and glad, panting for the new life opening upon him; the freedom, the joy of the manly struggle for fame, which he vows he will win. Tom Rook, in other words, is installed at Trinity College, attends lectures, reads at home, goes to chapel, uses wine-parties moderately, and bids fair to be one of the topmost men of his year.

Tom goes down for the Christmas vacation. (What a man he is grown, and how his sister and mother quarrel which shall walk with him down the village; and what stories the old gentleman lugs out with his old port, and how he quotes Æschylus, to be sure!) The pupils are away too, and the three have Tom in quiet. Alas! I fear the place has grown a little too quiet for Tom: however, he reads very stoutly of mornings; and sister Harriet peeps with a great deal of wonder into huge books of scribbling-

paper, containing many strange diagrams, and complicated arrangements of *x*'s and *y*'s.

May comes, and the college examinations: the delighted parent receives at breakfast, on the 10th of that month, two letters, as follows:—

FROM THE REV. SOLOMON SNORTER TO THE REV. ATHANASIUS ROOK.

"TRINITY, *May* 10.

"DEAR CREDO,*—I wish you joy. Your lad is the best man of his year, and I hope in four more to see him at our table. In classics he is, my dear friend, *facile princeps*; in mathematics he was run hard (*entre nous*) by a lad of the name of Snick, a Westmoreland man and a sizar. We must keep up Thomas to his mathematics, and I have no doubt we shall make a fellow and a wrangler of him.

"I send you his college bill, £105, 10s.; rather heavy, but this is the first term, and that, you know, is expensive: I shall be glad to give you a receipt for it. By the way, the young man is *rather* too fond of amusement, and lives with a very expensive set. Give him a lecture on this score.—Yours, SOL. SNORTER."

Next comes Mr. Tom Rook's own letter: it is long, modest; we only give the postscript:—

"P.S.—Dear Father, I forgot to say that, as I live in the very best set in the University (Lord Bagwig, the Duke's eldest son, you know, vows he will give me a living), I have been led into one or two expenses which will frighten you. I lost £30 to the Honourable Mr. Deuceace (a son of Lord Crabs) at Bagwig's, the other day at dinner; and owe £54 more for desserts and hiring horses, which I can't send into Snorter's bill.† Hiring horses is so deuced expensive; next term I must have a nag of my own, that's positive."

The Rev. Athanasius read the postscript with much less

* This is most probably a joke on the Christian name of Mr. Rook.

† It is, or was, the custom for young gentlemen at Cambridge to have unlimited credit with tradesmen, whom the college tutors paid, and then sent the bills to the parents of the young men.

gusto than the letter. However, Tom has done his duty, and the old gentleman won't balk his pleasure; so he sends him £100, with a "God bless you!" and mamma adds, in a postscript, that "he must always keep well with his aristocratic friends, for he was made only for the best society."

A year or two passes on: Tom comes home for the vacations; but Tom has sadly changed—he has grown haggard and pale. At second year's examination (owing to an unlucky illness) Tom was not classed at all; and Snick, the Westmoreland man, has carried everything before him. Tom drinks more after dinner than his father likes; he is always riding about and dining in the neighbourhood, and coming home—quite odd, his mother says—ill-humoured, unsteady on his feet, and husky in his talk. The Reverend Athanasius begins to grow very, very grave: they have high words, even the father and son; and oh, how Harriet and her mother tremble and listen at the study door when these disputes are going on!

The last term of Tom's undergraduateship arrives: he is in ill-health, but he will make a mighty effort to retrieve himself for his degree; and early in the cold winter's morning—late, late at night—he toils over his books; and the end is that, a month before the examination, Thomas Rook, Esquire, has a brain-fever, and Mrs. Rook, and Miss Rook, and the Reverend Athanasius Rook, are all lodging at the "Hoop," an inn in Cambridge town, and day and night round the couch of poor Tom.

* * * * *

O sin, woe, repentance! O touching reconciliation and burst of tears on the part of son and father, when one morning at the parsonage, after Tom's recovery, the old gentleman produces a bundle of receipts, and says, with a broken voice, "There, boy, don't be vexed about your debts. Boys will be boys, I know, and I have paid all demands." Everybody cries in the house at this news—the mother and daughter most profusely; even Mrs. Stokes, the old housekeeper, who shakes master's hand, and actually kisses Mr. Tom.

Well, Tom begins to read a little for his fellowship, but in vain; he is beaten by Mr. Snick, the Westmoreland man.

He has no hopes of a living; Lord Bagwig's promises were all moonshine. Tom must go to the bar; and his father, who has long left off taking pupils, must take them again, to support his son in London.

Why tell you what happens when there? Tom lives at the West End of the town, and never goes near the Temple; Tom goes to Ascot and Epsom along with his great friends; Tom has a long bill with Mr. Rymell, another long bill with Mr. Nugee; he gets into the hands of the Jews: and his father rushes up to London on the outside of the coach, to find Tom in a sponging-house in Cursitor Street—the nearest approach he has made to the Temple during his three years' residence in London.

I don't like to tell you the rest of the history. The Reverend Athanasius was not immortal, and he died a year after his visit to the sponging-house, leaving his son exactly one farthing, and his wife one hundred pounds a year, with remainder to his daughter. But, Heaven bless you! the poor things would never allow Tom to want while they had plenty, and they sold out and sold out the three thousand pounds, until, at the end of three years, there did not remain one single stiver of them; and now Miss Harriet is a governess, with sixty pounds a year, supporting her mother, who lives upon fifty.

As for Tom, he is a regular *leg* now—leading the life already described. When I met him last it was at Baden, where he was on a professional tour, with a carriage, a courier, a valet, a confederate, and a case of pistols. He has been in five duels—he has killed a man who spoke lightly about his honour; and at French or English hazard, at billiards, at whist, at loo, écarté, blind-hookey, drawing straws, or beggar-my-neighbour, he will cheat you—cheat you for a hundred pounds or for a guinea, and murder you afterwards if you like.

Abroad, our friend takes military rank, and calls himself Captain Rook; when asked of what service, he says he was with Don Carlos or Queen Christina; and certain it is that he was absent for a couple of years, nobody knows where—he may have been with General Evans, or he may have been at the Sainte Pélagie in Paris, as some people vow he was.

go. If he is a stout, cautious bird, of course *you* must be more cautious; if he is excessively silly and scared, perhaps the best way is just to take him round the neck at once, and strip the whole stock of plumage from his back.

The feathers of the human pigeon being thus violently abstracted from him, no others supply their place. And yet I do not pity him. He is now only undergoing the destiny of pigeons, and is, I do believe, as happy in his plucked as in his feathered state. He cannot purse out his breast, and bury his head, and fan his tail, and strut in the sun as if he were a turkey-cock. Under all those fine airs and feathers he was but what he is now—a poor little meek, silly, cowardly bird, and his state of pride is not a whit more natural to him than his fallen condition. He soon grows used to it. He is too great a coward to despair; much too mean to be frightened because he must live by doing meanness. He is sure, if he cannot fly, to fall somehow or other on his little miserable legs: on these he hops about, and manages to live somewhere in his own mean way. He has but a small stomach, and doesn't mind what food he puts into it. He sponges on his relatives; or else just before his utter ruin he marries and has nine children (and such a family *always* lives); he turns bully most likely, takes to drinking, and beats his wife, who supports him, or takes to drinking too; or he gets a little place, a very little place—you hear he has some tide-waitership, or is clerk to some new milk company, or is lurking about a newspaper. He dies, and a subscription is raised for the Widow Pigeon, and we look no more to find a likeness of him in his children, who are as a new race. Blessed are ye little ones! for ye are born in poverty, and may bear it, or surmount it and die rich. But woe to the pigeons of this earth! for they are born rich that they may die poor.

The end of Captain Rook—for we must bring both him and the paper to an end—is not more agreeable, but somewhat more manly and majestic than the conclusion of Mr. Pigeon. If you walk over to the Queen's Bench Prison, I would lay a wager that a dozen such are to be found there in a moment. They have a kind of Lucifer look with them, and stare at you with fierce, twinkling, crow-footed eyes; or

grin from under huge grizzly moustaches, as they walk up and down in their tattered brocades. What a dreadful activity is that of a madhouse or a prison!—a dreary flagged courtyard, a long dark room, and the inmates of it, like the inmates of the menagerie cages, ceaselessly walking up and down! Mary Queen of Scots says very touchingly:—

"Pour mon mal estranger
Je ne m'arreste en place;
Mais, j'en ay beau changer
Si ma douleur n'efface!"

Up and down, up and down—the inward woe seems to spur the body onwards; and I think in both madhouse and prison you will find plenty of specimens of our Captain Rook. It is fine to mark him under the pressure of this woe, and see how fierce he looks when stirred up by the long pole of memory. In these asylums the Rooks end their lives: or, more happy, they die miserably in a miserable provincial town abroad—and for the benefit of coming Rooks they commonly die early; you as seldom hear of an old Rook (practising his trade) as of a rich one. It is a short-lived trade; not merry, for the gains are most precarious, and perpetual doubt and dread are not pleasant accompaniments of a profession; not agreeable either, for though Captain Rook does not mind *being* a scoundrel, no man likes to be considered as such, and as such, he knows very well, does the world consider Captain Rook; not profitable, for the expenses of the trade swallow up all the profits of it, and in addition leave the bankrupt with certain habits that have become as nature to him, and which, to live, he must gratify. I know no more miserable wretch than our Rook in his autumn days, at dismal Calais or Boulogne, or at the Bench yonder, with a whole load of diseases and wants, that have come to him in the course of his profession—the diseases and wants of sensuality, always pampered, and now agonizing for lack of its unnatural food; the mind, which *must* think now, and has only bitter recollections, mortified ambitions, and unavailing scoundrelisms to con over! O Captain Rook, what nice "chums" do you take with you into prison; what

pleasant companions of exile follow you over the *fines patriæ*, or attend, the only watchers, round your miserable death-bed!

My son, be not a Pigeon in thy dealings with the world; but it is better to be a Pigeon than a Rook.

THE FASHIONABLE AUTHORESS.

PAYING a visit the other day to my friend Timson, who, I need not tell the public, is editor of that famous evening paper, the —— (and let it be said that there is no more profitable acquaintance than a gentleman in Timson's situation, in whose office, at three o'clock daily, you are sure to find new books, lunch, magazines, and innumerable tickets for concerts and plays)—going, I say, into Timson's office, I saw on the table an immense paper cone or funnel, containing a bouquet of such a size that it might be called a bosquet, wherein all sorts of rare geraniums, luscious magnolias, stately dahlias, and other floral produce were gathered together—a regular flower-stack.

Timson was for a brief space invisible, and I was left alone in the room with the odours of this tremendous bow-pot, which filled the whole of the inky, smutty, dingy apartment with an agreeable incense. "*O rus! quando te aspiciam?*" exclaimed I, out of the Latin grammar, for imagination had carried me away to the country, and I was about to make another excellent and useful quotation (from the 14th book of the Iliad, Madam), concerning "ruddy lotuses, and crocuses, and hyacinths," when all of a sudden Timson appeared. His head and shoulders had, in fact, been engulfed in the flowers, among which he might be compared to any Cupid, butterfly, or bee. His little face was screwed up into such an expression of comical delight and triumph that a Methodist parson would have laughed at it in the midst of a funeral sermon.

"What are you giggling at?" said Mr. Timson, assuming a high, aristocratic air.

"Has the goddess Flora made you a present of that

bower, wrapped up in white paper; or did it come by the vulgar hands of yonder gorgeous footman, at whom all the little printer's devils are staring in the passage?"

"Stuff!" said Timson, picking to pieces some rare exotic, worth at the very least fifteenpence; "a friend, who knows that Mrs. Timson and I are fond of these things, has sent us a nosegay, that's all."

I saw how it was. "Augustus Timson," exclaimed I sternly, "the Pimlicoes have been with you: if that footman did not wear the Pimlico plush, ring the bell and order me out; if that three-cornered billet lying in your snuff-box has not the Pimlico seal to it, never ask me to dinner again."

"Well, if it *does*," says Mr. Timson, who flushed as red as a peony, "what is the harm? Lady Fanny Flummery may send flowers to her friends, I suppose? The conservatories at Pimlico House are famous all the world over, and the Countess promised me a nosegay the very last time I dined there."

"Was that the day when she gave you a box of bonbons for your darling little Ferdinand?"

"No, another day."

"Or the day when she promised you her carriage for Epsom Races?"

"No."

"Or the day when she hoped that her Lucy and your Barbara-Jane might be acquainted, and sent to the latter from the former a new French doll and tea-things?"

"Fiddlestick!" roared out Augustus Timson, Esquire; "I wish you wouldn't come bothering here. I tell you that Lady Pimlico is my friend—my friend, mark you, and I will allow no man to abuse her in my presence: I say again *no man;*" wherewith Mr. Timson plunged both his hands violently into his breeches-pockets, looked me in the face sternly, and began jingling his keys and shillings about.

At this juncture (it being about half-past three o'clock in the afternoon) a one-horse chaise drove up to the —— office (Timson lives at Clapham, and comes in and out in this machine)—a one-horse chaise drove up; and amidst a scuffling and crying of small voices, good-humoured Mrs. Timson bounced into the room.

"Here we are, deary," said she: "we'll walk to the Meryweathers'; and I've told Sam to be in Charles Street at twelve with the chaise: it wouldn't do, you know, to come out of the Pimlico box and have the people cry, 'Mrs. Timson's carriage!' for old Sam and the chaise."

Timson, to this loving and voluble address of his lady, gave a peevish, puzzled look towards the stranger, as much as to say, "*He's* here."

"La, Mr. Smith! and how *do* you do?—So rude—I didn't see you; but the fact is, we are all in *such* a bustle! Augustus has got Lady Pimlico's box for the *Puritani* to-night, and I vowed I'd take the children."

Those young persons were evidently, from their costume, prepared for some extraordinary festival. Miss Barbara-Jane, a young lady of six years old, in a pretty pink slip and white muslin, her dear little poll bristling over with papers, to be removed previous to the play; while Master Ferdinand had a pair of nankeens (I can recollect Timson in them in the year 1825—a great buck), and white silk stockings, which belonged to his mamma. His frill was very large and very clean, and he was fumbling perpetually at a pair of white kid gloves, which his mamma forbade him to assume before the opera.

And "Look here!" and "Oh, precious!" and "Oh, my!" were uttered by these worthy people as they severally beheld the vast bouquet, into which Mrs. Timson's head flounced, just as her husband's had done before.

"I must have a green-house at the Snuggery—that's positive, Timson, for I'm passionately fond of flowers; and how kind of Lady Fanny!—Do you know her ladyship, Mr. Smith?"

"Indeed, madam, I don't remember having ever spoken to a lord or a lady in my life."

Timson smiled in a supercilious way. Mrs. Timson exclaimed, "La, how odd! Augustus knows ever so many. Let's see—there's the Countess of Pimlico and Lady Fanny Flummery; Lord Doldrum (Timson touched up his travels, you know); Lord Gasterton, Lord Guttlebury's eldest son; Lady Pawpaw (they say she ought not to be visited, though); Baron Strum—Strom—Strumpf——"

What the baron's name was I have never been able to learn; for here Timson burst out with a "Hold your tongue, Bessy!" which stopped honest Mrs. Timson's harmless prattle altogether, and obliged that worthy woman to say meekly, "Well, Gus, I did not think there was any harm in mentioning your acquaintance." Good soul! it was only because she took pride in her Timson that she loved to enumerate the great names of the persons who did him honour. My friend the editor was, in fact, in a cruel position, looking foolish before his old acquaintance, stricken in that unfortunate sore point in his honest, good-humoured character. The man adored the aristocracy, and had that wonderful respect for a lord which, perhaps the observant reader may have remarked, especially characterizes men of Timson's way of thinking.

In old days at the club (we held it in a small public-house near the Coburg Theatre, some of us having free admissions to that place of amusement, and some of us living for convenience in the immediate neighbourhood of one of his Majesty's prisons in that quarter)—in old days, I say, at our spouting and toasted-cheese club, called "The Forum," Timson was called Brutus Timson, and not Augustus, in consequence of the ferocious republicanism which characterized him, and his utter scorn and hatred of a bloated, do-nothing aristocracy. His letters in *The Weekly Sentinel*, signed "Lictor," must be remembered by all our readers. He advocated the repeal of the corn laws, the burning of machines, the rights of labour, etc., etc., wrote some pretty defences of Robespierre, and used seriously to avow, when at all in liquor, that, in consequence of those "Lictor" letters, Lord Castlereagh had tried to have him murdered, and thrown over Blackfriars Bridge.

By what means Augustus Timson rose to his present exalted position, it is needless here to state; suffice it that in two years he was completely bound over neck-and-heels to the bloodthirsty aristocrats, hereditary tyrants, etc. One evening he was asked to dine with a secretary of the Treasury (the —— is ministerial, and has been so these forty-nine years); at the house of that secretary of the Treasury he met a lord's son. Walking with Mrs. Timson

in the Park next Sunday, that lord's son saluted him. Timson was from that moment a slave, had his coats made at the West End, cut his wife's relations (they are dealers in marine-stores, and live at Wapping), and had his name put down at two clubs.

Who was the lord's son? Lord Pimlico's son, to be sure, the Honourable Frederick Flummery, who married Lady Fanny Foxy, daughter of Pitt Castlereagh, second Earl of Reynard, Kilbrush Castle, county Kildare. The earl had been ambassador in '14: Mr. Flummery, his attaché: he was twenty-one at that time, with the sweetest tuft on his chin in the world. Lady Fanny was only four-and-twenty, just jilted by Prince Scoroncocolo, the horrid man who had married Miss Solomonson with a plum. Fanny had nothing; Frederick had about seven thousand pounds less. What better could the young things do than marry? Marry they did, and in the most delicious secrecy. Old Reynard was charmed to have an opportunity of breaking with one of his daughters for ever, and only longed for an occasion never to forgive the other nine.

A wit of the Prince's time, who inherited and transmitted to his children a vast fortune in genius, was cautioned on his marriage to be very economical. "Economical!" said he; "my wife has nothing, and I have nothing: I suppose a man can't live under *that!*" Our interesting pair, by judiciously employing the same capital, managed, year after year, to live very comfortably, until, at last, they were received into Pimlico House by the dowager (who has it for her life), where they live very magnificently. Lady Fanny gives the most magnificent entertainments in London, has the most magnificent equipage, and a very fine husband; who has his equipage as fine as her ladyship's; his seat in the omnibus, while her ladyship is in the second tier. They say he plays a good deal—ay, and pays, too, when he loses.

And how, prithee? Her ladyship is a FASHIONABLE AUTHORESS. She has been at this game for fifteen years, during which period she has published forty-five novels, edited twenty-seven new magazines, and I don't know how many annuals, besides publishing poems, plays, desultory thoughts, memoirs, recollections of travel, and pamphlets

without number. Going one day to church, a lady, whom I knew by her Leghorn bonnet and red ribbons, *rûche* with poppies and marigolds, brass ferronnière, great red hands, black silk gown, thick shoes, and black silk stockings—a lady, whom I knew, I say, to be a devotional cook, made a bob to me just as the psalm struck up, and offered me a share of her hymn-book. It was,—

HEAVENLY CHORDS;
A COLLECTION OF
SACRED STRAINS,
SELECTED, COMPOSED, AND EDITED BY THE
LADY FRANCES JULIANA FLUMMERY

—being simply a collection of heavenly chords robbed from the lyres of Watts, Wesley, Brady, and Tate, etc.; and of sacred strains from the rare collection of Sternhold and Hopkins. Out of this, cook and I sang; and it is amazing how much our fervour was increased by thinking that our devotions were directed by a lady whose name was in the Red Book.

The thousands of pages that Lady Fanny Flummery has covered with ink exceed all belief. You must have remarked, Madam, in respect of this literary fecundity, that your amiable sex possesses vastly greater capabilities than we do; and that while a man is painfully labouring over a letter of two sides, a lady will produce a dozen pages, crossed, dashed, and so beautifully neat and close, as to be well-nigh invisible. The readiest of ready pens has Lady Flummery; her Pegasus gallops over hot-pressed satin so as to distance all gentlemen riders: like Camilla, it scours the plain—of Bath—and never seems punished or fatigued; only it runs so fast that it often leaves all sense behind it; and there it goes on, on, scribble, scribble, scribble, never flagging until it arrives at that fair winning-post on which is written "FINIS," or "THE END;" and shows that the course, whether it be of novel, annual, poem, or what not, is complete.

Now, the author of these pages doth not pretend to describe the inward thoughts, ways, and manner of being, of my Lady Flummery, having made before that humiliating confession that lords and ladies are personally unknown to him;

so that all milliners, butchers' ladies, dashing young clerks, and apprentices, or other persons who are anxious to cultivate a knowledge of the aristocracy, had better skip over this article altogether. But he hath heard it whispered, from pretty good authority, that the manners and customs of these men and women resemble, in no inconsiderable degree, the habits and usages of other men and women, whose names are unrecorded by Debrett. Granting this, and that Lady Flummery is a woman pretty much like another, the philosophical reader will be content that we rather consider her ladyship in her public capacity, and examine her influence upon mankind in general.

Her person, then, being thus put out of the way, her works, too, need not be very carefully sifted and criticised; for what is the use of peering into a millstone, or making calculations about the figure o? The woman has not, in fact, the slightest influence upon literature for good or for evil: there are a certain number of fools whom she catches in her flimsy traps; and why not? They are made to be humbugged, or how should we live? Lady Flummery writes everything; that is, nothing. Her poetry is mere wind; her novels, stark nought; her philosophy, sheer vacancy: how should she do any better than she does? how could she succeed if she *did* do any better? If she did write well, she would not be Lady Flummery; she would not be praised by Timson and the critics, because she would be an honest woman, and would not bribe them. Nay, she would probably be written down by Timson and Co., because, being an honest woman, she utterly despised them and their craft.

We have said what she writes for the most part. Individually, she will throw off any number of novels that Messrs. Soap and Diddle will pay for; and collectively, by the aid of self and friends, scores of "Lyrics of Loveliness," "Beams of Beauty," "Pearls of Purity," etc. Who does not recollect the success which her "Pearls of the Peerage" had? She is going to do the "Beauties of the Baronetage;" then we shall have the "Daughters of the Dustmen," or some such other collection of portraits. Lady Flummery has around her a score of literary gentlemen, who are bound to her, body and soul: give them a dinner, a smile from an opera-

box, a wave of the hand in Rotten Row, and they are hers, neck and heels. *Vides, mi fili*, etc. See, my son, with what a very small dose of humbug men are to be bought. I know many of these individuals: there is my friend, M'Lather, an immense pudgy man: I saw him one day walking through Bond Street in company with an enormous ruby breast-pin. "Mac!" shouted your humble servant, "that is a Flummery ruby;" and Mac hated and cursed us ever after. Presently came little Fitch, the artist; he was rigged out in an illuminated velvet waistcoat—Flummery again. "There's only one like it in town," whispered Fitch to me confidentially, "and Flummery has that." To be sure, Fitch had given, in return, half a dozen of the prettiest drawings in the world. "I wouldn't charge for them, you know," he says; "for, hang it, Lady Flummery is my friend." Oh, Fitch, Fitch!

Fifty more instances could be adduced of her ladyship's ways of bribery. She bribes the critics to praise her, and the writers to write for her; and the public flocks to her as it will to any other tradesman who is properly puffed. Out comes the book. As for its merits, we may allow, cheerfully, that Lady Flummery has no lack of that natural *esprit* which every woman possesses; but here praise stops. For the style, she does not know her own language; but, in revenge, has a smattering of half a dozen others. She interlards her works with fearful quotations from the French, fiddle-faddle extracts from Italian operas, German phrases fiercely mutilated, and a scrap or two of bad Spanish; and upon the strength of these murders she calls herself an authoress. To be sure there is no such word as authoress. If any young nobleman or gentleman of Eton College, when called upon to indite a copy of verses in praise of Sappho, or the Countess of Dash, or Lady Charlotte What-d'ye-call-'em, or the Honourable Mrs. Somebody, should fondly imagine that he might apply to those fair creatures the title of *auctrix*, I pity that young nobleman's or gentleman's case. Doctor Wordsworth and assistants would swish that error out of him in a way that need not here be mentioned. Remember it henceforth, ye writeresses—there is no such word as authoress. *Auctor*, Madam, is the word. "*Optima tu proprii nominis auctor eris;*" which, of course, means that

you are, by your proper name, an author, not an authoress. The line is in Ainsworth's Dictionary, where anybody may see it.

This point is settled then: there is no such word as authoress. But what of that? Are authoresses to be bound by the rules of grammar? The supposition is absurd. We don't expect them to know their own language; we prefer rather the little graceful pranks and liberties they take with it. When, for instance, a celebrated authoress, who wrote a Diaress, calls somebody the prototype of his own father, we feel an obligation to her ladyship: the language feels an obligation; it has a charm and a privilege with which it was never before endowed: and it is manifest that if we can call ourselves antetypes of our grandmothers—can prophesy what we had for dinner yesterday, and so on—we get into a new range of thought, and discover sweet regions of fancy and poetry, of which the mind hath never even had a notion until now.

It may be then considered as certain that an authoress *ought* not to know her own tongue. Literature and politics have this privilege in common, that any ignoramus may excel in both. No apprenticeship is required, that is certain; and if any gentleman doubts, let us refer him to the popular works of the present day, where, if he find a particle of scholarship, or any acquaintance with any books in any language, or if he be disgusted by any absurd, stiff, old-fashioned notions of grammatical propriety, we are ready to qualify our assertion. A friend of ours came to us the other day in great trouble. His dear little boy, who had been for some months attaché to the stables of Mr. Tilbury's establishment, took a fancy to the corduroy breeches of some other gentleman employed in the same emporium, appropriated them, and afterwards disposed of them for a trifling sum to a relation—I believe his uncle. For this harmless freak, poor Sam was absolutely seized, tried at Clerkenwell Sessions, and condemned to six months' useless rotatory labour at the House of Correction. "The poor fellow was bad enough before, sir," said his father, confiding in our philanthropy, "he picked up such a deal of slang among the stable-boys; but if you could hear him since he came from

the mill—he knocks you down with it, sir. I am afraid, sir, of his becoming a regular prig; for though he's a 'cute chap, can read and write, and is mighty smart and handy, yet no one will take him into service, on account of that business of the breeches!"

"What, sir?" exclaimed we, amazed at the man's simplicity; "*such* a son, and you don't know what to do with him! A 'cute fellow, who can write, who has been educated in a stable-yard, and has had six months' polish in a university—I mean a prison—and you don't know what to do with him! Make a *fashionable novelist* of him, and be hanged to you!" And proud am I to say that that young man, every evening, after he comes home from his work (he has taken to street-sweeping in the day, and I don't advise him to relinquish a certainty)—proud am I to say that he devotes every evening to literary composition, and is coming out with a novel, in numbers, of the most fashionable kind.

This little episode is only given for the sake of example—*par exemple*, as our authoress would say, who delights in French of the very worst kind. The public likes only the extremes of society, and votes mediocrity vulgar. From the Author they will take nothing but Fleet Ditch; from the Authoress, only the very finest of rose-water. I have read so many of her ladyship's novels, that, egad! now I don't care for anything under a marquis. Why the deuce should we listen to the intrigues, the misfortunes, the virtues, and conversations of a couple of countesses, for instance, when we can have duchesses for our money? What's a baronet? Pish! pish! that great coarse red fist in his scutcheon turns me sick! What's a baron? A fellow with only one more ball than a pawnbroker; and, upon my conscience, just as common. Dear Lady Flummery, in your next novel, give us no more of these low people; nothing under strawberry leaves, for the mercy of Heaven! Suppose, now, you write us

ALBERT;

OR,

WHISPERINGS AT WINDSOR.

BY THE LADY FRANCES FLUMMERY.

There is a subject—fashionable circles, curious revelations, exclusive excitement, etc. To be sure, you *must* here introduce a viscount, and that is sadly vulgar; but we will pass him for the sake of the ministerial *portfeuille*, which is genteel. Then you might do "Leopold; or, the Bride of Neuilly;" "The Victim of Würtemberg;" "Olga; or, the Autocrat's Daughter" (a capital title); "*Henri*; or, Rome in the Nineteenth Century:" we can fancy the book, and a sweet paragraph about it in Timson's paper.

"HENRI, by Lady Frances Flummery.—Henri! Who can he be? A little bird whispers in our ear that the gifted and talented Sappho of our hemisphere has discovered some curious particulars in the life of *a certain young chevalier*, whose appearance at Rome has so frightened the court of the Tu-l-ries. Henri de B-rd-ux is of an age when the *young god* can shoot his darts into the bosom with fatal accuracy; and if the Marchesina degli Spinachi (whose portrait our lovely authoress has sung with a *kindred hand*) be as beauteous as she is represented (and as all who have visited in the exclusive circles of the eternal city say she is), no wonder at her effect upon the Pr-nce. *Verbum sap.* We hear that a few copies are still remaining. The enterprising publishers, Messrs. Soap and Diddle, have announced, we see, several other works by the same accomplished pen."

This paragraph makes its appearance in small type in the ——, by the side, perhaps, of a disinterested recommendation of bear's-grease, or some remarks on the extraordinary cheapness of plate in Cornhill. Well, two or three days after, my dear Timson, who has been asked to dinner, writes in his own hand, and causes to be printed in the largest type, an article to the following effect:—

"HENRI.

"BY LADY F. FLUMMERY.

"This is another of the graceful evergreens which the fair fingers of Lady Fanny Flummery are continually strewing upon our path. At once profound and caustic, truthful and passionate, we are at a loss whether most to admire the

manly grandeur of her ladyship's mind, or the exquisite nymph-like delicacy of it. Strange power of fancy! Sweet enchantress, that rules the mind at will, stirring up the utmost depths of it into passion and storm, or wreathing and dimpling its calm surface with countless summer smiles. As a great bard of old time has expressed it, what do we not owe to woman?

"What do we not owe her? More love, more happiness, more calm of vexed spirit, more truthful aid and pleasant counsel; in joy, more delicate sympathy; in sorrow, more kind companionship. We look into her cheery eyes, and, in those wells of love, care drowns; we listen to her siren voice, and, in that balmy music, banished hopes come winging to the breast again."

This goes on for about three-quarters of a column. I don't pretend to understand it, but with flowers, angels, Wordsworth's poems, and the old dramatists, one can never be wrong, I think; and though I have written the above paragraphs myself, and don't understand a word of them, I can't, upon my conscience, help thinking that they are mighty pretty writing. After, then, this has gone on for about three-quarters of a column (Timson does it in spare minutes, and fits it to any book that Lady Fanny brings out), he proceeds to particularize, thus:—

"The griding excitement which thrills through every fibre of the soul as we peruse these passionate pages is almost too painful to bear. Nevertheless, one drains the draughts of poesy to the dregs, so deliciously intoxicating is its nature. We defy any man who begins these volumes to quit them ere he has perused each line. The plot may be briefly told as thus:—Henri, an exiled prince of Franconia (it is easy to understand the flimsy allegory), arrives at Rome, and is presented to the sovereign Pontiff. At a feast, given in his honour at the Vatican, a dancing girl (the loveliest creation that ever issued from poet's brain) is introduced, and exhibits some specimens of her art. The young prince is instantaneously smitten with the charms of the saltatrice; he breathes into her ear the accents of his love, and is listened to with favour. He has, however, a rival, and a

powerful one. The POPE has already cast his eye upon the Apulian maid, and burns with lawless passion. One of the grandest scenes ever writ occurs between the rivals. The Pope offers to Castanetta every temptation; he will even resign his crown and marry her; but she refuses. The prince can make no such offers; he cannot wed her. 'The blood of Borbone,' he says, 'may not be thus misallied.' He determines to avoid her. In despair, she throws herself off the Tarpeian rock, and the Pope becomes a maniac. Such is an outline of this tragic tale.

"Besides this fabulous and melancholy part of the narrative, which is unsurpassed, much is written in the gay and sparkling style for which our lovely author is unrivalled. The sketch of the Marchesina degli Spinachi and her lover, the Duca di Gammoni, is delicious; and the intrigue between the beautiful Princess Kalbsbraten and Count Bouterbrod is exquisitely painted: everybody, of course, knows who these characters are. The discovery of the manner in which Kartoffeln, the Saxon envoy, poisons the princess's dishes, is only a graceful and real repetition of a story which was agitated throughout all the diplomatic circles last year. Schinken, the Westphalian, must not be forgotten; nor Olla, the Spanish spy. How does Lady Fanny Flummery, poet as she is, possess a sense of the ridiculous and a keenness of perception which would do honour to a Rabelais or a Rochefoucauld? To those who ask this question, we have one reply, and that an example—not among women, 'tis true; for till the Lady Fanny came among us, woman never soared so high. Not among women, indeed! But in comparing her to that great spirit for whom our veneration is highest and holiest, we offer no dishonour to his shrine; in saying that he who wrote of *Romeo* and *Desdemona* might have drawn Castanetta and Enrico, we utter but the truthful expressions of our hearts; in asserting that so long as SHAKESPEARE lives, so long will FLUMMERY endure; in declaring that he who rules in all hearts, and over all spirits and all climes, has found a congenial spirit, we do but justice to Lady Fanny—justice to him who sleeps by Avon!"

With which we had better, perhaps, conclude. Our object

has been, in descanting upon the Fashionable Authoress, to point out the influence which her writing possesses over society, rather than to criticise her life. The former is quite harmless, and we don't pretend to be curious about the latter. The woman herself is not so blamable; it is the silly people who cringe at her feet that do the mischief, and, gulled themselves, gull the most gullable of publics. Think you, O Timson, that her ladyship asks you for your *beaux yeux* or your wit? Fool, you do think so, or try and think so; and yet you know she loves not you, but the —— newspaper. Think, little Fitch, in your fine waistcoat, how dearly you have paid for it! Think, M'Lather, how many smirks and lies and columns of good three-halfpence-a-line matter that big garnet pin has cost you! The woman laughs at you, man—you, who fancy that she is smitten with you—laughs at your absurd pretensions, your way of eating fish at dinner, your great hands, your eyes, your whiskers, your coat, and your strange north-country twang. Down with this Delilah! Avaunt, O Circe, giver of poisonous feeds! To your natural haunts, ye gentlemen of the press! If bachelors, frequent your taverns, and be content. Better is Sally the waiter, and the first cut of the joint, than a dinner of four courses, and humbug therewith. Ye who are married, go to your homes; dine not with those persons who scorn your wives. Go not forth to parties that ye may act Tom Fool for the amusement of my lord and my lady, but play your natural follies among your natural friends. Do this for a few years, and the Fashionable Authoress is extinct. O Jove, what a prospect! She, too, has retreated to her own natural calling, being as much out of place in a book as you, my dear M'Lather, in a drawing-room. Let milliners look up to her; let Howell and James swear by her; let simpering dandies caper about her car; let her write poetry if she likes, but only for the most exclusive circles; let mantua-makers puff her, but not men: let such things be, and the Fashionable Authoress is no more! Blessed, blessed thought! No more fiddle-faddle novels! no more namby-pamby poetry! no more fribble "Blossoms of Loveliness!" When will you arrive, O happy Golden Age?

THE ARTISTS.

It is confidently stated that there was once a time when the quarter of Soho was thronged by the fashion of London. Many wide streets are there in the neighbourhood, stretching cheerfully towards Middlesex Hospital in the north, bounded by Dean Street in the west, where the lords and ladies of William's time used to dwell,—till in Queen Anne's time Bloomsbury put Soho out of fashion, and Great Russell Street became the pink of the mode.

Both these quarters of the town have submitted to the awful rule of nature, and are now to be seen undergoing the dire process of decay. Fashion has deserted Soho, and left her in her gaunt, lonely old age. The houses have a vast, dingy, mouldy, dowager look. No more beaux, in mighty periwigs, ride by in gilded clattering coaches; no more lackeys accompany them, bearing torches, and shouting for precedence. A solitary policeman paces these solitary streets—the only dandy in the neighbourhood. You hear the milkman yelling his milk with a startling distinctness, and the clack of a servant-girl's pattens sets people a-staring from the windows.

With Bloomsbury we have here nothing to do; but as genteel stockbrokers inhabit the neighbourhood of Regent's Park, as lawyers have taken possession of Russell Square, so Artists have seized upon the desolate quarter of Soho. They are to be found in great numbers in Berners Street. Up to the present time naturalists have never been able to account for this mystery of their residence. What has a painter to do with Middlesex Hospital? He is to be found in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. And why? Philosophy cannot tell any more than why milk is found in a cocoa-nut.

Look at Newman Street. Has earth, in any dismal corner of her great round face, a spot more desperately gloomy? The windows are spotted with wafers, holding up ghastly bills, that tell you the house is "To Let." Nobody walks there—not even an old-clothes-man; the first inhabited house has bars to the windows, and bears the name of "Ahasuerus, officer to the Sheriff of Middlesex;" and here, above all

places, must painters take up their quarters—day by day must these reckless people pass Ahasuerus's treble gate. There was my poor friend Tom Tickner (who did those sweet things for "The Book of Beauty"). Tom, who could not pay his washerwoman, lived opposite the bailiff's, and could see every miserable debtor or greasy Jew writ-bearer that went in or out of his door. The street begins with a bailiff's, and ends with a hospital. I wonder how men live in it, and are decently cheerful, with this gloomy, double-barrelled moral pushed perpetually into their faces. Here, however, they persist in living, no one knows why. Owls may still be found roosting in Netley Abbey, and a few Arabs are to be seen at the present minute in Palmyra.

The ground-floors of the houses where painters live are mostly make-believe shops, black, empty warehouses containing fabulous goods. There is a sedan-chair opposite a house in Rathbone Place that I have myself seen every day for forty-three years. The house has commonly a huge india-rubber-coloured door, with a couple of glistening brass plates and bells. A portrait-painter lives on the first floor; a great historical genius inhabits the second. Remark the first floor's middle drawing-room window: it is four feet higher than its two companions, and has taken a fancy to peep into the second-floor front. So much for the outward appearance of their habitations, and for the quarters in which they commonly dwell. They seem to love solitude, and their mighty spirits rejoice in vastness and gloomy ruin.

I don't say a word here about those geniuses who frequent the thoroughfares of the town, and have picture-frames containing a little gallery of miniature peers, beauties, and general officers, in the Quadrant, the passages about St. Martin's Lane, the Strand, and Cheapside. Lord Lyndhurst is to be seen in many of these gratis exhibitions—Lord Lyndhurst cribbed from Chalon; Lady Peel from Sir Thomas; Miss Croker from the same; *the* Duke, from ditto; an original officer in the Spanish Legion; a colonel or so of the Bunhill Row Fencibles; a lady on a yellow sofa, with four children in little caps and blue ribands. We have all of us seen these pretty pictures, and are aware that our own features may be "done in this style." Then there is the man on the chain-

pier at Brighton who pares out your likeness in sticking-plaster; there is Miss Croke, or Miss Runt, who gives lessons in poonah-painting, japanning, or mezzo-tinting; Miss Stump, who attends ladies' schools with large chalk heads from Le Brun or the Cartoons; Rubbery, who instructs young gentlemen's establishments in pencil; and Sepio, of the Water-Colour Society, who paints before eight pupils daily, at a guinea an hour, keeping his own drawings for himself.

All these persons, as the most indifferent reader must see, equally belong to the tribe of Artists (the last not more than the first), and in an article like this should be mentioned properly. But though this paper has been extended from eight pages to sixteen, not a volume would suffice to do justice to the biographies of the persons above mentioned. Think of the superb Sepio, in a light-blue satin cravat, and a light-brown coat, and yellow kids, tripping daintily from Grosvenor Square to Gloucester Place, a small sugar-loaf boy following, who carries his morocco portfolio. Sepio scents his handkerchief, curls his hair, and wears, on a great coarse fist, a large emerald ring that one of his pupils gave him. He would not smoke a cigar for the world; he is always to be found at the Opera; and gods! how he grins, and waggles his head about, as Lady Flummery nods to him from her box.

He goes to at least six great parties in the season. At the houses where he teaches, he has a faint hope that he is received as an equal, and propitiates scornful footmen by absurd donations of sovereigns. The rogue has plenty of them. He has a stockbroker, and a power of guinea-lessons stowed away in the Consols. There are a number of young ladies of genius in the aristocracy who admire him hugely; he begs you to contradict the report about him and Lady Smigsmag. Every now and then he gets a present of game from a marquis; the City ladies die to have lessons of him; he prances about the Park on a high-bred cock-tail, with lacquered boots and enormous high heels; and he has a mother and sisters somewhere—washerwomen, it is said, in Pimlico.

How different is his fate to that of poor Rubbery, the school drawing-master! Highgate, Homerton, Putney, Hackney,

Hornsey, Turnham Green, are his resorts. He has a select seminary to attend at every one of these places; and if from all these nurseries of youth he obtains a sufficient number of half-crowns to pay his week's bills, what a happy man is he!

He lives most likely in a third floor in Howland Street, and has commonly five children, who have all a marvellous talent for drawing—all save one, perhaps, that is an idiot, which a poor sick mother is ever carefully tending. Sepio's great aim and battle in life is to be considered one of the aristocracy. Honest Rubbery would fain be thought a gentleman, too; but, indeed, he does not know whether he is so or not. Why be a gentleman? a gentleman Artist does not obtain the wages of a tailor. Rubbery's butcher looks down upon him with a royal scorn; and his wife, poor gentle soul (a clergyman's daughter, who married him in the firm belief that her John would be knighted, and make an immense fortune)—his wife, I say, has many fierce looks to suffer from Mrs. Butcher, and many meek excuses or prayers to proffer, when she cannot pay her bill—or when, worst of all, she has humbly to beg for a little scrap of meat upon credit against John's coming home. He has five-and-twenty miles to walk that day, and must have something nourishing when he comes in—he is killing himself, poor fellow, she knows he is; and Miss Crick has promised to pay him his quarter's charge on the very next Saturday. "Gentlefolks, indeed," says Mrs. Butcher; "pretty gentlefolks these, as can't pay for half a pound of steak!" Let us thank Heaven that the Artist's wife has her meat, however,—there is good in that shrill, fat, mottle-faced Mrs. Brisket after all.

Think of the labours of that poor Rubbery. He was up at four in the morning, and toiled till nine upon a huge damp, icy lithographic stone, on which he has drawn the "Star of the Wave," or the "Queen of the Tourney," or "She met at Almack's," for Lady Flummery's last new song. This done, at half-past nine he is to be seen striding across Kensington Gardens, to wait upon the before-named Miss Crick at Lamont House. Transport yourself in imagination to the Misses Kittle's seminary, Potzdam Villa, Upper Homerton, four miles from Shoreditch, and at half-past two Professor Rubbery is to be seen swinging along towards the

gate. Somebody is on the look-out for him; indeed, it is his eldest daughter, Marianne, who has been pacing the shrubbery and peering over the green railings this half-hour past. She is with the Misses Kittle on the "mutual system," a thousand times more despised than the butchers' and the grocers' daughters, who are educated on the same terms, and whose papas are warm men in Aldgate. Wednesday is the happiest day of Marianne's week, and this the happiest hour of Wednesday. Behold! Professor Rubbery wipes his hot brows and kisses the poor thing, and they go in together out of the rain, and he tells her that the twins are well out of the measles, thank God! and that Tom has just done the Antinous, in a way that must make him sure of the Academy prize, and that mother is better of her rheumatism now. He has brought her a letter, in large round-hand, from Polly; a famous soldier, drawn by little Frank; and when, after his two hours' lesson, Rubbery is off again, our dear Marianne cons over the letter and picture a hundred times with soft, tearful smiles, and stows them away in an old writing-desk, amidst a heap more of precious home relics, wretched trumpery scraps and baubles, that you and I, Madam, would sneer at, but that in the poor child's eyes (and, I think, in the eyes of One who knows how to value widows' mites and humble sinners' offerings) are better than bank-notes and Pitt diamonds. O kind Heaven, that has given these treasures to the poor! Many and many an hour does Marianne lie awake with full eyes, and yearn for that wretched old lodging in Howland Street, where mother and brothers lie sleeping; and, gods! what a fête it is when twice or thrice in the year she comes home!

* * * * *

I forget how many hundred millions of miles, for how many billions of centuries, how many thousands of decillions of angels, peris, houris, demons, afreets, and the like, Mahomet travelled, lived, and counted, during the time that some water was falling from a bucket to the ground; but have we not been wandering most egregiously away from Rubbery, during the minute in which his daughter is changing his shoes, and taking off his reeking mackintosh in the hall of Potzdam Villa? She thinks him the finest artist that ever cut an

H. B.—that's positive; and as a drawing-master his merits are wonderful, for at the Misses Kittle's annual vacation festival, when the young ladies' drawings are exhibited to their mammas and relatives (Rubbery attending in a clean shirt, with his wife's large brooch stuck in it, and drinking negus along with the very best)—at the annual festival, I say, it will be found that the sixty-four drawings exhibited—"Tintern Abbey," "Kenilworth Castle," "Horse—from Carl Vernet," "Head—from West," or what not (say sixteen of each sort)—are the one exactly as good as the other; so that, although Miss Slamcoe gets the prize, there is really no reason why Miss Timson, who is only four years old, should not have it; her design being accurately stroke for stroke, tree for tree, curl for curl, the same as Miss Slamcoe's, who is eighteen. The fact is, that of these drawings, Rubbery, in the course of the year, has done every single stroke, although the girls and their parents are ready to take their affidavits (or, as I heard once a great female grammarian say, their *affies davit*) that the drawing-master has never been near the sketches. This is the way with them; but mark!—when young ladies come home, are settled in life, and mammas of families, can they design so much as a horse, or a dog, or a "moo-cow," for little Jack, who bawls out for them? Not they! Rubbery's pupils have no more notion of drawing, any more than Sepio's of painting, when that eminent artist is away.

Between these two gentlemen lie a whole class of teachers of drawing, who resemble them more or less. I am ashamed to say that Rubbery takes his pipe in the parlour of an hotel, of which the largest room is devoted to the convenience of poor people, amateurs of British gin; whilst Sepio trips down to the Club, and has a pint of the smallest claret. But of course the tastes of men vary, and you find them simple or presuming, careless or prudent, natural and vulgar, or false and atrociously genteel, in all ranks and stations of life.

As for the other persons mentioned at the beginning of this discourse—namely, the cheap portrait-painter, the portrait-cutter in sticking-plaster, and Miss Croke, the teacher of mezzotint and poonah-painting—nothing need be said of them in this place, as we have to speak of matters more important. Only

about Miss Croke, or about other professors of cheap art, let the reader most sedulously avoid them. Mezzotinto is a take-in, poonah-painting a rank, villainous deception. So is "Grecian art without brush or pencils." These are only small mechanical contrivances over which young ladies are made to lose time. And now, having disposed of these small skirmishers who hover round the great body of Artists, we are arrived in presence of the main force, that we must begin to attack in form. In the "partition of the earth," as it has been described by Schiller, the reader will remember that the poet, finding himself at the end of the general scramble without a single morsel of plunder, applied passionately to Jove, who pitied the poor fellow's condition, and complimented him with a seat in the empyrean. "The strong and the cunning," says Jupiter, "have seized upon the inheritance of the world, whilst thou wert star-gazing and rhyming—not one single acre remains wherewith I can endow thee; but, in revenge, if thou art disposed to visit me in my own heaven, come when thou wilt, it is always open to thee."

The cunning and strong have scrambled and struggled more on our own little native spot of earth than in any other place on the world's surface; and the English poet (whether he handles a pen or a pencil) has little other refuge than that windy, unsubstantial one which Jove has vouchsafed to him. Such airy board and lodging is, however, distasteful to many; who prefer therefore to give up their poetical calling, and, in a vulgar beef-eating world, to feed upon and fight for vulgar beef.

For such persons (among the class of painters) it may be asserted that portrait-painting was invented. It is the artist's compromise with heaven—"the light of common day," in which, after a certain quantity of "travel from the East," the genius fades at last. Abbé Barthélemy (who sent Le Jeune Anacharsis travelling through Greece in the time of Plato—travelling through ancient Greece in lace ruffles, red heels, and a pigtail),—Abbé Barthélemy, I say, declares that somebody was once standing against a wall in the sun, and that somebody else traced the outline of somebody's shadow; and so painting was "invented." Angelica Kauffmann has made a neat picture of this neat subject; and very well worthy she

was of handling it. Her painting *might* grow out of a wall and a piece of charcoal, and honest Barthélemy might be satisfied that he had here traced the true origin of the art. What a base pedigree have these abominable Greek, French, and High-Dutch heathens invented for that which is divine! —a wall, ye gods, to be represented as the father of that which came down radiant from you! The man who invented such a blasphemy ought to be impaled upon broken bottles, or shot off pitilessly by spring-guns, nailed to the bricks like a dead owl or a weasel, or tied up—a kind of vulgar Prometheus —and baited for ever by the house-dog.

But let not our indignation carry us too far. Lack of genius in some, of bread in others, of patronage in a shop-keeping world, that thinks only of the useful, and is little inclined to study the sublime, has turned thousands of persons calling themselves, and wishing to be, Artists, into so many common face-painters, who must look out for the "kalon" in the fat features of a red-gilled alderman, or, at best, in a pretty, simpering, white-necked beauty from "Almack's." The dangerous charms of these latter, especially, have seduced away many painters; and we often think that this very physical superiority which English ladies possess, this tempting brilliancy of health and complexion which belongs to them more than to any others, has operated upon our Artists as a serious disadvantage, and kept them from better things. The French call such beauty "*La beauté du Diable;*" and a devilish power it has truly: before our Armidas and Helens how many Rinaldos and Parises have fallen, who are content to forget their glorious calling, and slumber away their energies in the laps of these soft tempters. O ye British enchantresses! I never see a gilded annual-book without likening it to a small island near Cape Pelorus, in Sicily, whither, by twanging of harps, singing of ravishing melodies, glancing of voluptuous eyes, and the most beautiful fashionable undress in the world, the naughty sirens lured the passing seaman. Steer clear of them, ye Artists! pull, pull for your lives, ye crews of Suffolk Street and the Water-Colour gallery! stop your ears, bury your eyes, tie yourselves to the masts, and away with you from the gaudy, smiling "Books of Beauty." Land, and you are ruined! Look well among

the flowers on yonder beach: it is whitened with the bones of painters.

For my part, I never have a model under seventy, and her with several shawls and a cloak on. By these means the imagination gets fair play, and the morals remain unendangered.

Personalities are odious; but let the British public look at the pictures of the celebrated Mr. Shalloon—the moral British public—and say whether our grandchildren (or the grandchildren of the exalted personages whom Mr. Shalloon paints) will not have a queer idea of the manners of their grandmammas as they are represented in the most beautiful, dexterous, captivating water-colour drawings that ever were? Heavenly powers, how they simper and ogle! with what gimcracks of lace, ribbons, ferronnières, smelling-bottles, and what not, is every one of them overloaded! What shoulders, what ringlets, what funny little pug-dogs do they most of them exhibit to us! The days of Lancret and Watteau are lived over again, and the court ladies of the time of Queen Victoria look as moral as the immaculate countesses of the days of Louis Quinze. The last President of the Royal Academy* is answerable for many sins and many imitators, especially for that gay, simpering, meretricious look which he managed to give to every lady who sat to him for her portrait; and I do not know a more curious contrast than that which may be perceived by any one who will examine a collection of his portraits by the side of some by Sir Joshua Reynolds. They seem to have painted different races of people; and when one hears very old gentlemen talking of the superior beauty that existed in their early days (as very old gentlemen, from Nestor downwards, have and will), one is inclined to believe that there is some truth in what they say; at least, that the men and women under George the Third were far superior to their descendants in the time of George the Fourth. Whither has it fled, that calm matronly grace or beautiful virgin innocence which belonged to the happy women who sat to Sir Joshua? Sir Thomas's ladies are ogling out of their gilt frames, and asking us for admiration; Sir Joshua's sit quiet, in maiden meditation fancy free, not anxious

* Sir Thomas Lawrence.

for applause, but sure to command it; a thousand times more lovely in their sedate serenity than Sir Thomas's ladies in their smiles and their satin ball-dresses.

But this is not the general notion, and the ladies prefer the manner of the modern Artist. Of course, such being the case, the painters must follow the fashion. One could point out half a dozen Artists who, at Sir Thomas's death, have seized upon a shred of his somewhat tawdry mantle. There is Carmine, for instance, a man of no small repute, who will stand as the representative of his class.

Carmine has had the usual education of a painter in this country: he can read and write—that is, has spent years drawing the figure—and has made his foreign tour. It may be that he had original talent once, but he has learned to forget this, as the great bar to his success; and must imitate, in order to live. He is among Artists what a dentist is among surgeons—a man who is employed to decorate the human head, and who is paid enormously for so doing. You know one of Carmine's beauties at any exhibition, and see the process by which they are manufactured. He lengthens the noses, widens the foreheads, opens the eyes, and gives them the proper languishing leer; diminishes the mouth, and infallibly tips the ends of it with a pretty smile of his favourite colour. He is a personable, white-handed, bald-headed, middle-aged man now, with that grave blandness of look which one sees in so many prosperous empty-headed people. He has a collection of little stories and court gossip about Lady This and "my particular friend Lord So-and-so," which he lets off in succession to every sitter: indeed, a most bland, irreproachable, gentleman-like man. He gives most patronizing advice to young Artists, and makes a point of praising all—not certainly too much, but in a gentleman-like, indifferent, simpering way. This should be the maxim with prosperous persons who have had to make their way, and wish to keep what they have made. They praise everybody, and are called good-natured, benevolent men. Surely no be nevolence is so easy; it simply consists in lying, and smiling, and wishing everybody well. You will get to do so quite naturally at last, and at no expense of truth. At first, when a man has feelings of his own—feelings of love or of anger—

this perpetual grin and good-humour is hard to maintain. I used to imagine, when I first knew Carmine, that there were some particular springs in his wig (that glossy, oily, curl crop of chestnut hair) that pulled up his features into a smile and kept the muscles so fixed for the day. I don't think so now, and should say he grinned even when he was asleep and his teeth were out; the smile does not lie in the manufacture of the wig, but in the construction of the brain. Claude Carmine has the organ of *don't-care-a-damn-ativeness* wonderfully developed; not that reckless, don't-care-a-damn-ativeness which leads a man to disregard all the world, and himself into the bargain. Claude stops before he comes to himself; but beyond that individual member of the Royal Academy, has not a single sympathy for a single human creature. The account of his friends' deaths, woes, misfortunes, or good luck he receives with equal good-nature; he gives three splendid dinners per annum—Gunter, Dukes, Fortnum and Mason, everything; he dines out the other three hundred and sixty-two days in the year, and was never known to give away a shilling, or to advance, for one half-hour, the forty pounds per quarter wages that he gives to Mr. Scumble, who works the backgrounds, limbs, and draperies of his portraits.

He is not a good painter. How should he be, whose painting, as it were, never goes beyond a whisper, and who would make a general simpering as he looked at an advancing cannon-ball? But he is not a bad painter, being a keen, respectable man of the world, who has a cool head, and knows what is what. In France, where tigerism used to be the fashion among the painters, I make no doubt Carmine would have let his beard and wig grow, and looked the fiercest of the fierce. But with us a man must be genteel. The perfection of style (in writing and in drawing-rooms) being "*de ne pas en avoir*," Carmine of course is agreeably vapid. His conversation has accordingly the flavour and briskness of a clear, brilliant, stale bottle of soda-water: once in five minutes or so you see rising up to the surface a little bubble—a little tiny shining point of wit; it rises and explodes feebly, and then dies. With regard to wit, people of fashion (as we are given to understand) are satisfied with a mere *soupçon* of

it. Anything more were indecorous; a genteel stomach could not bear it. Carmine knows the exact proportions of the dose, and would not venture to administer to his sitters anything beyond the requisite quantity.

There is a great deal more said here about Carmine the man than Carmine the artist; but what can be written about the latter? New ladies in white satin, new Generals in red, new Peers in scarlet and ermine, and stout Members of Parliament pointing to inkstands and sheets of letter-paper, with a Turkey carpet beneath them, a red curtain above them, a Doric pillar supporting them, and a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning lowering and flashing in the background, spring up every year, and take their due positions "upon the line" in the Academy, and send their complements of hundreds to swell Carmine's heap of Consols. If he paints Lady Flummery for the tenth time, in the character of the tenth Muse, what need have we to say anything about it? The man is a good workman, and will manufacture a decent article at the best price; but we should no more think of noticing each, than of writing fresh critiques upon every new coat that Nugee or Stultz turned out. The papers say, in reference to his picture "No. 591. 'Full-length portrait of her Grace the Duchess of Doldrum. Carmine, R. A.' Mr. Carmine never fails; this work, like all others by the same artist, is excellent"—or, "No. 591, &c. The lovely Duchess of Doldrum has received from Mr. Carmine's pencil ample justice: the *chiar' oscuro* of the picture is perfect; the likeness admirable; the keeping and colouring have the true Titianesque gusto. If we might hint a fault, it has the left ear of the lap-dog a 'little' out of drawing."

Then, perhaps, comes a criticism which says:—"The Duchess of Doldrum's picture by Mr. Carmine is neither better nor worse than five hundred other performances of the same artist. It would be very unjust to say that these portraits are bad, for they have really a considerable cleverness. But to say that they were good, would be quite as false; nothing in our eyes was ever further from being so. Every ten years Mr. Carmine exhibits what is called an original picture of three inches square; but beyond this, nothing original is to be found in him: as a lad, he copied

Reynolds, then Opie, then Lawrence; then having made a sort of style of his own, he has copied himself ever since," etc.

And then the critic goes on to consider the various parts of Carmine's pictures. In speaking of critics, their peculiar relationship with painters ought not to be forgotten; and as in a former paper we have seen how a fashionable authoress has her critical toadies, in like manner has the painter his enemies and friends in the press—with this difference, probably, that the writer can bear a fair quantity of abuse without wincing, while the artist not uncommonly grows mad at such strictures, considers them as personal matters inspired by a private feeling of hostility, and hates the critic for life who has ventured to question his judgment in any way. We have said before, poor Academicians, for how many conspiracies are you made to answer! We may add now, poor critics, what black personal animosities are discovered for you, when you happen (right or wrong, but according to your best ideas) to speak the truth! Say that Snooks's picture is badly coloured. "O heavens!" shrieks Snooks, "what can I have done to offend this fellow?" Hint that such a figure is badly drawn; and Snooks instantly declares you to be his personal enemy, actuated only by envy and vile pique. My friend Pebbler, himself a famous artist, is of opinion that the critic should *never* abuse the painter's performances, because, says he, the painter knows much better than any one else what his own faults are, and because you never do him any good. Are men of the brush so obstinate?—very likely; but the public—the public? are we not to do our duty by it too, and, aided by our superior knowledge and genius for the fine arts, point out to it the way it should go? Yes, surely; and as by the efforts of dull or interested critics many bad painters have been palmed off upon the nation as geniuses of the first degree, in like manner the sagacious and disinterested (like some we could name) have endeavoured to provide this British nation with pure principles of taste—or at least, to prevent them from adopting such as are impure.

Carmine, to be sure, comes in for very little abuse; and, indeed, he deserves but little. He is a fashionable painter, and preserves the golden mediocrity which is necessary for

the fashion. Let us bid him good-bye. He lives in a house all to himself, most likely; has a footman, sometimes a carriage; is apt to belong to the "Athenæum;" and dies universally respected—that is, not one single soul cares for him dead, as he, living, did not care for one single soul.

Then, perhaps, we should mention M'Gilp, or Blather, rising young men, who will fill Carmine's place one of these days, and occupy his house in ——, when the fullness of time shall come, and (he borne to a narrow grave in the Harrow Road by the whole mourning Royal Academy) they shall leave their present first-floor in Newman Street, and step into his very house and shoes.

There is little difference between the juniors and the seniors. They grin when they are talking of him together, and express a perfect confidence that they can paint a head against Carmine any day—as very likely they can. But until his demise, they are occupied with painting people about the Regent's Park and Russell Square; are very glad to have the chance of a popular clergyman, or a college tutor, or a Mayor of Stoke Poges after the Reform Bill. Such characters are commonly mezzotinted afterwards; and the portrait of our esteemed townsman, So-and-so, by that talented artist, Mr. M'Gilp of London, is favourably noticed by the provincial press, and is to be found over the sideboards of many country gentlemen. If they come up to town, to whom do they go? To M'Gilp, to be sure; and thus, slowly, his practice and his prices increase.

The Academy student is a personage that should not be omitted here. He resembles very much, outwardly, the medical student, and has many of the latter's habits and pleasures. He very often wears a broad-brimmed hat and a fine dirty crimson velvet waistcoat, his hair commonly grows long, and he has braiding to his pantaloons. He works leisurely at the Academy; he loves theatres, billiards, and novels; and has his house-of-call somewhere in the neighbourhood of Saint Martin's Lane, where he and his brethren meet and sneer at Royal Academicians. If you ask him what line of art he pursues, he answers with a smile exceedingly supercilious, "Sir, I am an historical painter;" meaning that he will only condescend to take subjects from Hume, or Robert-

son, or from the classics—which he knows nothing about. This stage of an historical painter is only preparatory, lasting perhaps from eighteen to five-and-twenty, when the gentleman's madness begins to disappear, and he comes to look at life sternly in the face, and to learn that man shall not live by historical painting alone. Then our friend falls to portrait-painting, or annual-painting, or makes some other such sad compromise with necessity.

He has probably a small patrimony, which defrays the charge of his studies and cheap pleasures during his period of apprenticeship. He makes the *obligé* tour to France and Italy, and returns from those countries with a multitude of spoiled canvases, and a large pair of moustaches, with which he establishes himself in one of the dingy streets of Soho before mentioned. There is poor Pipson, a man of indomitable patience and undying enthusiasm for his profession. He could paper Exeter Hall with his studies from the life, and with portraits in chalk and oil of French *sapeurs* and Italian brigands, that kindly descend from their mountain-caverns, and quit their murderous occupations, in order to sit to young gentlemen at Rome, at the rate of tenpence an hour. Pipson returns from abroad, establishes himself, has his cards printed, and waits and waits for commissions for great historical pictures. Meanwhile, night after night, he is to be found at his old place in the Academy, copying the old Life Guardsman—working, working away—and never advancing one jot. At eighteen, Pipson copied statues and Life Guardsmen to admiration; at five-and-thirty he can make admirable drawings of Life Guardsmen and statues. Beyond this he never goes; year after year his historical picture is returned to him by the envious Academicians, and he grows old, and his little patrimony is long since spent, and he earns nothing himself. How does he support hope and life?—that is the wonder. No one knows until he tries (which God forbid he should!) upon what a small matter hope and life can be supported. Our poor fellow lives on from year to year in a miraculous way; tolerably cheerful in the midst of his semi-starvation, and wonderfully confident about next year, in spite of the failures of the last twenty-five. Let us thank God for imparting to us, poor weak mortals, the inestimable blessing

of *vanity*. How many half-witted votaries of the arts—poets, painters, actors, musicians—live upon this food, and scarcely any other! If the delusion were to drop from Pipson's eyes, and he should see himself as he is—if some malevolent genius were to mingle with his feeble brains one fatal particle of common sense—he would just walk off Waterloo Bridge, and abjure poverty, incapacity, cold lodgings, unpaid baker's bills, ragged elbows, and deferred hopes, at once and for ever.

We do not mean to depreciate the profession of historical painting, but simply to warn youth against it as dangerous and unprofitable. It is as if a young fellow should say, "I will be a Raffaelle or a Titian—a Milton or a Shakespeare;" and if he will count up how many people have lived since the world began, and how many there have been of the Raffaelle or Shakespeare sort, he can calculate to a nicety what are the chances in his favour. Even successful historical painters, what are they?—in a worldly point of view, they mostly inhabit the second-floor, or have great desolate studios in back premises, whither Life Guardsmen, old-clothesmen, blackamoors, and other "properties" are conducted, to figure at full length as Roman conquerors, Jewish high-priests, or Othellos on canvas. Then there are gay, smart, water-colour painters—a flourishing and pleasant trade. Then there are shabby, fierce-looking geniuses, in ringlets, and all but rags, who paint, and whose pictures are never sold, and who vow they are the objects of some general and scoundrelly conspiracy. There are landscape-painters, who travel to the uttermost ends of the earth, and brave heat and cold, to bring to the greedy British public views of Cairo, Calcutta, St. Petersburg, Timbuctoo. You see English Artists under the shadow of the Pyramids, making sketches of the Copts, perched on the backs of dromedaries, accompanying a caravan across the desert, or getting materials for an annual in Iceland or Siberia. What genius and what energy do not they all exhibit—these men, whose profession, in this wise country of ours, is scarcely considered as liberal!

If we read the works of the Reverend Dr. Lempriere, Monsieur Winckelmann, Professor Plato, and others who have written concerning the musty old Grecians, we shall

find that the Artists of those barbarous times meddled with all sorts of trades besides their own, and dabbled in fighting, philosophy, metaphysics, both Scotch and German, politics, music, and the deuce knows what. A rambling sculptor, who used to go about giving lectures in those days, Socrates by name, declared that the wisest of men in his time were artists. This Plato, before mentioned, went through a regular course of drawing, figure and landscape, blacklead, chalk, with or without stump, sepia, water-colour, and oils. Was there ever such absurdity known? Among these benighted heathens painters were the most accomplished gentlemen, and the most accomplished gentlemen were painters; the former would make you a speech, or read you a dissertation on Kant, or lead you a regiment, with the very best statesman, philosopher, or soldier in Athens. And they had the folly to say, that by thus busying and accomplishing themselves in all manly studies, they were advancing eminently in their own peculiar one. What was the consequence? Why, that fellow Socrates not only made a miserable, fifth-rate sculptor, but was actually hanged for treason.

And serve him right. Do *our* young artists study anything beyond the proper way of cutting a pencil or drawing a model? Do you hear of *them* hard at work over books, and bothering their brains with musty learning? Not they, forsooth. We understand the doctrine of division of labour, and each man sticks to his trade. Artists do not meddle with the pursuits of the rest of the world; and, in revenge, the rest of the world does not meddle with Artists. Fancy an Artist being a senior wrangler or a politician; and, on the other hand, fancy a real gentleman turned painter! No, no; ranks are defined. A real gentleman may get money by the law, or by wearing a red coat and fighting, or a black one and preaching; but that he should sell himself to *Art*—forbid it, Heaven! And do not let your ladyship on reading this cry, "Stuff!—stupid envy, rank republicanism: an Artist *is* a gentleman." Madam, would you like to see your son, the Honourable Fitzroy Plantagenet, a painter? You would die sooner; the escutcheon of the Smigsmags would be blotted for ever, if Plantagenet ever ventured to make a mercantile use of a bladder of paint.

Time was—some hundred years back, when writers lived in Grub Street, and poor ragged Johnson shrunk behind a screen in Cave's parlour—that the author's trade was considered a very mean one, which a gentleman of family could not take up but as an amateur. This absurdity is pretty nearly worn out now, and I do humbly hope and pray for the day when the other shall likewise disappear. If there be any nobleman with a talent that way, why—why don't we see him among the R.A.'s?

501. The Schoolmaster. Sketch taken abroad	Brum, Henry, Lord, *R.A., F.R.S., S.A., of the National Institute of France.*
502. View of the Artist's residence at Windsor	Maconkey, Right Honourable T. B.
503. Murder of the Babes in the Tower	Rustle, Lord J. Pill, Right Honourable Sir Robert.
504. A little Agitation	O'Carrol, Daniel, M.R.I.A.

Fancy, I say, such names as these figuring in the catalogue of the Academy! And why should they not? The real glorious days of the art (which wants equality and not patronage) will revive then. Patronage—a plague on the word!—it implies inferiority; and in the name of all that is sensible, why is a respectable country gentleman, or a city attorney's lady, or any person of any rank, however exalted, to "patronize" an Artist?

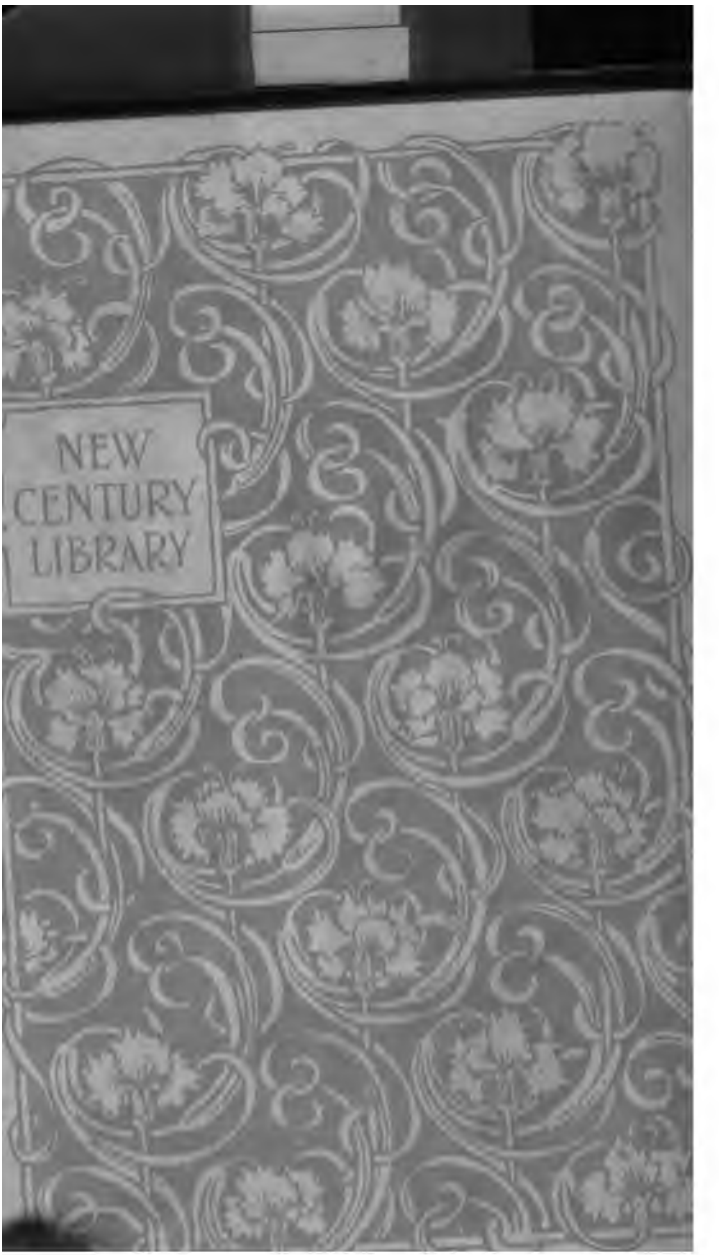
There are some who sigh for the past times, when magnificent, swaggering Peter Paul Rubens (who himself patronized a queen) rode abroad with a score of gentlemen in his train, and a purse-bearer to scatter ducats; and who love to think how he was made an English knight and a Spanish grandee, and went of embassies as if he had been a born marquis. Sweet it is to remember, too, that Sir Antony Vandyck, K.B., actually married out of the peerage; and that when Titian dropped his mahlstick, the Emperor Charles V. picked it up (O gods! what heroic self-devotion)—picked it up, saying, "I can make fifty dukes, but not one Titian." Nay, was not the Pope of Rome going to make Raffaelle a Cardinal,—and were not these golden days?

Let us say at once, "No." The very fuss made about certain painters in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

shows that the body of artists had no rank or position in the world. They hung upon single patrons; and every man who holds his place by such a tenure must feel himself an inferior, more or less. The times are changing now; and as authors are no longer compelled to send their works abroad under the guardianship of a great man and a slavish dedication, painters, too, are beginning to deal directly with the public. Who are the great picture-buyers now?—the engravers and their employers, the people—"the only source of legitimate power," as they say after dinner. A fig then for Cardinals' hats! Were Mr. O'Connell in power to-morrow, let us hope he would not give one, not even a paltry bishopric *in partibus*, to the best painter in the Academy. What need have they of honours out of the profession? Why are they to be beknighted like a parcel of aldermen? For my part, I solemnly declare that I will take nothing under a peerage, after the exhibition of my great picture; and don't see, if painters *must* have titles conferred upon them for eminent services, why the Marquis of Mulready, or the Earl of Landseer, should not sit in the House as well as any law or soldier lord.

The truth to be elicited from this little digressive dissertation is this painful one—that young artists are not generally as well instructed as they should be; and let the Royal Academy look to it, and give some sound courses of lectures to their pupils on literature and history, as well as on anatomy, or light and shade.

END OF "CHARACTER SKETCHES."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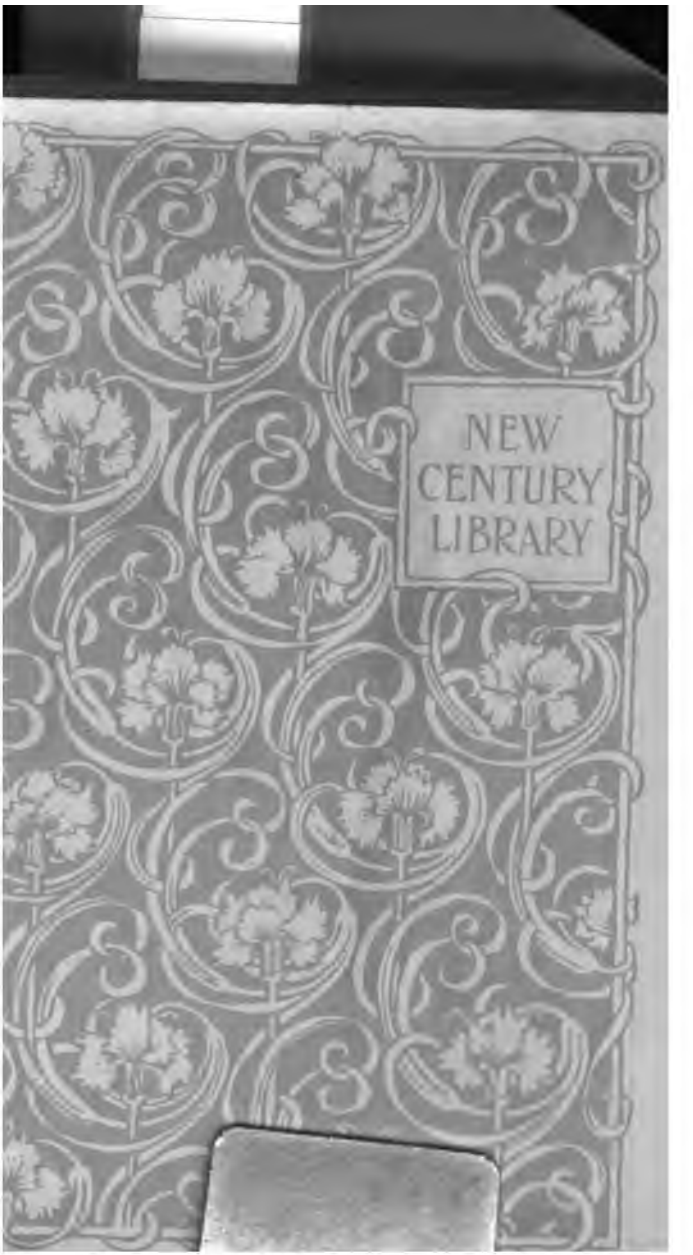
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